ANCIENT INDIAN TRADITION & MYTHOLOGY

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VOLUME 42

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THE

PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART IV

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY

Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS PUBLISHERS
PRIVATE LIMITED
Delhi

First Edition : Delhi, 1990

ISBN: 81-208-0663-8

Also available at:
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS
Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110 007
Chowk, Varanasi 221 001
Ashok Rajpath, Patna 800 004
24, Race Course Road, Bangalore 560 001
120, Royapettah High Road, Mylapore, Madras 600 004

UNESCO COLLECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE WORKS—Indian Series
This book has been accepted in the Indian Translation Series of the Unesco Collection of Representative Works jointly sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Government of India.

PRINTED IN INDIA
BY JAINENDRA PRAKASH JAIN AT SHRI JAINENDRA PRESS, A-45 NARAINA INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE I, NEW DELHI 110 028 AND PUBLISHED BY NARENDRA PRAKASH JAIN FOR MOTILAL BANARSIDASS PUBLISHERS PVT. LTD., BUNGALOW ROAD, JAWAHAR NAGAR, DELHI 110 007.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

In this IV part of the *Padma Purāṇa* are included the remaining chapters, 91-125, of the second section, *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, and the whole of the third section, *Svargakhaṇḍa*, having 62 chapters in all.

Our observation that the names of the sections have little relevance to the contents is further corroborated in this part. One may look, for example, at the contents of the *Svargakhaṇḍa*. The second chapter of it treats of creation and should logically go to the first section, *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa*. Chapters 3-9 deal with the division of the earth into islands (*dvīpas*), their mountains, rivers, countries and their population etc., which are more appropriately the topics of *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*. Again, almost all of the remaining chapters of this section deal with the holy places of India, the merits acquired by visiting them, taking a bath, performing charities, offering *piṇḍas* to the manes and worship to gods, and the codes of conduct laid down for the various castes and stages of life as well as do's and don't's in respect of eating etc., which being very much 'earthly' matters logically belong to the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*.

Some conflicting statements about the size and structure of the Purāṇa are also found in this part. For example, the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, chapter 125, says that the number of verses in the Purāṇa was 52000 in Tretā, 22000 in Dvāpara and 12000 in Kali, while the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, chapter 1, gives a static figure of 55000. And similar is the case with the sections of the Purāṇa. According to the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, chapter 125, the Purāṇa has five sections only, viz. *Sṛṣṭi*, *Bhūmi*, *Svarga*, *Pātāla* and *Uttara*, thus leaving *Brahma* and *Kriyāyoga*, whereas the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, Chapter 1, enumerates six sections, viz., *Ādi*, *Bhūmi*, *Brahma*, *Pātāla*, *Kriyā* and *Uttara*. In this latter list the names of *Sṛṣṭi* and *Svarga* (its own name!) are missing and an unfamiliar name '*Ādi*' appears. In the last chapter (62), however, the name for this section occurs as '*Ādi-*

svarga', which would imply that this, i.e. *Svargakhaṇḍa*, was the first section of the Purāṇa, thus refusing any locus standi to the *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa*.

Now a few words about the contents. The reader will find some new and interesting anecdotes and stories here extolling holy places such as Puṣkara, showing the efficacy of a bath in the rivers Revā, Gaṅgā etc. or of Viṣṇu's name, and glorifying worship of some god, e.g. Viṣṇu or Śiva, or some virtuous conduct. Subāhu's story shows that a gift of food, especially to a brāhmaṇa, is the best charity, and is even superior to penance. The stories of Aśokasundarī (II. 102ff), of Kāmodā (II. 118ff) and of the five gandharva maidens (III. 22ff) have a good deal of dramatic interest. The story of Hemakuṇḍala and his two wicked sons (III. 30ff) shows the efficacy of the river Yamunā.

Pilgrimage to holy places is treated of in great detail. Next in importance is the code of conduct prescribed for the celebate student, the householder, the anchorite and the ascetic (III. 51ff). Do's and don't's in respect of eating etc. are minutely discussed. Giving shelter and food to brāhmaṇas is considered highly meritorious. Gift of a cow to a brāhmaṇa at Prayāga is supposed to liberate not only the donor but also his son, wife and servants. Worshipping brāhmaṇas is shown to be superior even to bathing at a holy place. Mother is spoken of as the most venerable person and maligning others the greatest sin for which there is no atonement. A brāhmaṇa not responding to salutation is condemned as a śūdra and one is advised not to salute him. Protection of even such insignificant insects as lice and bugs is prescribed.

Third in length is the description of the earth's geography which to a large extent seems to be a product of imagination rather than of a scientific survey, as is obvious from the highly exaggerated figures given therein. To take a few examples: The height of the Jambu tree which lends its name to the Jambudvīpa, is said to be one thousand and a hundred yojanas (1 yojana = 8/9 miles); the Mālyavat mountain measures fifty thousand yojanas; the span of human life in the Bhadrāśva country is said to be ten thousand years. The reader will find many more interesting descriptions here.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are extremely grateful to Dr. N.A. Deshpande for translating the text. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—Editor

CONTENTS

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedaśarman and Vañjula

Kuñjala said:

1-16a. Formerly when Indra was affected by (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa, he committed a great sin of having an illicit intercourse with Gautama's wife. He was abandoned by gods and brāhmaṇas. Indra, propless and shelterless, practised penance. At the end of his penance all deities, sages, yakṣas, kinnaras started a religious bath to honour the lord of gods. O best son, O noble one, having taken the lord of gods to the Mālavaka country they gave him a bath with (the water from) the pitchers filled with water. Then he was first taken to Vārāṇasī to give him a bath; then Indra (was taken) to Prayāga and then to Arghatīrtha. O best of brāhmaṇas, the noble one was given a bath by the magnanimous Puṣkara itself; he was also given a bath by all gods like Brahmā, by hosts of sages. Hallowed with Vedic hymns destroying all sins by sages, the lord of gods was given a bath by elephants, trees, serpents, snakes along with kinnaras. When that noble Indra was purified, his (sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa and (that of) illicit intercourse were gone. On the earth Indra's (sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa along with that terrible sin of illicit intercourse perished. Indra who was well-pleased granted a boon to the Holy Places: "Since, you, who, are pure, freed me from this very terrible sin, therefore, by my favour you will be holy and the lords of sacred places." Giving such a boon to them he gave a boon to (the) Mālava (country): "Since today you bore my dirt causing distress, therefore you will be adorned with food, drink, wealth and grains. There is no doubt about it. By my favour you will surely be very holy and free from bad times (like drought etc.)." After Indra, the lord of gods, had given him (i.e. the Mālava country) such a boon, all the Holy Places and also the Mālavaka country went to their respective places along with Indra.

Sūta said:

16b-17a. Since then the four, viz. Prayāga, Puṣkara, Vārāṇasī and Arghatīrtha obtained an excellent authority.

Kuñjala said:

17b-22. In the Pañcāla country there was a kṣatriya named Vidura. Due to folly he had formerly killed a brāhmaṇa. He, without the lock of hair on the crown of the head and without the sacred thread and without the (saffron-) mark (on his forehead) wandered for begging (saying): "I, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, have come. Give alms and food to the killer of a brāhmaṇa and a drunkard." Thus he formerly went to (different) houses and begged. Thus he came (to a spot) after having visited all the holy places. Yet, O best brāhmaṇa, (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa did not leave him. That sinful Vidura, full of agony and grief, and with his heart burning, resorted to the shade of a tree.

23-29a. Then, there lived in the Māgadha country a brāhmaṇa (named) Candraśarman; he was overcome with great delusion. He had killed his preceptor. The wicked one was deserted by his kinsmen and groups of relatives. He came there where Vidura stayed. He was without the lock of hair on the crown of his head and the sacred thread and the characteristic marks of a brāhmaṇa. Then he was asked by that wicked Vidura: "Who are you, unfortunate and of a distressed mind, that have come here? Why do you, bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa, roam over the earth?" Thus addressed by Vidura, that mean brāhmaṇa Candraśarman told him everything that he had formerly done and the sin he had committed while staying in his preceptor's house. (He said:) "I, highly deluded and agitated with anger, formerly killed my preceptor. Therefore I am now tormented."

29b-32. Having told all (his) account, Candraśarman asked (Vidura), "Who are you of an extremely distressed mind, that have resorted to the shade of (this) tree?" Vidura narrated his sin in brief. Then there came a third twice-born, emaciated due to affliction, a heap of many sins, and named Vedaśarman. Both (Vidura and Candraśarman) asked him: "Who are you, a distressed figure? Why are you roaming over the earth? Tell (us) your true condition."

33-40. Then Vedaśarman told them all that he had done: "I had illicit intercourse; I was despised by all people and also by my kinsmen and relatives. I am polluted by that sin. (Therefore) I am wandering over the earth like this." Then (there came a

vaiśya named Vañjula, who was a drunkard. He was particularly a killer of cow. As before he was asked by (the other three). He narrated all the sin that he committed before. All the other (three) heard all that he told. Thus the four most sinful ones gathered at one place. None of them shared with one another food or coverings. O noble one, they (however) talked to one another. They did not occupy the same seat, nor did they sleep in the same bed. Thus full of grief they went to many holy places; but their terrible sins did not perish. The holy places do not have the power to destroy major sins. They, Vidura and others, went to Kālañjara mountain.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

The Greatness of Revā

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Reaching Kālañjara (the four) very much afflicted, tormented by great sins, lamenting and senseless lived there; and there came a very glorious siddha. He asked them who were afflicted with great grief: "For what reason are you unhappy?" He the very wise one, and proficient in all (branches of) knowledge was told by them (the cause of their grief). The very meritorious one having known their great sin, showed compassion to them.

The siddha said:

4-36a. On the occasion of the new moon day falling on Monday, you four, impure with sins, should go to Prayāga, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, being the third, and Vārāṇasī, the fourth one. You will be free from sins when you will have bathed in the water of the Ganges. There is no doubt that you will attain purity.

All of them, instructed by him, carefully saluted him, (and) tormented by sins, quickly went from Kālañjara. The best twice-born ones—Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedśarman as the third, the drunkard and wicked-hearted vaiśya (named) Vañjulaka, having reached Vārāṇasī, O you best one, then to Prayāga, Puṣkara, and Arghatīrtha, when the new moon day fell on a Monday, went to the great city. When that auspicious day came they bathed in the water of the Ganges. Just by bathing (in the water of the Ganges) they became free from the sins like the murder of a cow. Those Holy Places, polluted with sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, and of drinking liquor, roamed over the earth. O best brāhmaṇa, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, Prayāga—the destroyer of sins, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth, were polluted with sins. All became black, and roamed in the form of swans. The best brāhmaṇas bathed at all holy places. Their blackness that had come to them through sin would not leave (them, though), O king, they again and again bathed at very holy places. O best brāhmaṇa, whichever holy places they, in the form of swans, visited, all of them, being very much afflicted went with them. Women of the form of sins roamed around them. In the form of swans they went to sixtyeight very holy places. O great king, they (i.e. Vidura and others), with their minds full of sins, again came to the Mānasa (lake) alongwith the very Holy Places. O great king, there they bathed, but the major sin did not leave them. The Mānasa (lake), with its mind full of the sense of shame, and having taken the form of a swan, became black-bodied—whom you have seen before. Then they went to the northern bank of Revā which destroys sins. O best brāhmaṇa, they became free from sins just by (taking) a bath at the confluence of (Revā and Kubjā), which was resorted to by gods and siddhas. Having given up that (dark) complexion, they obtained merit. Whichever sacred place the swans had gone to, and had bathed at, women seeing them, laughed (at them); and the sin did not leave them at all, (but) by the fire in the form of the water of Kubjā even the greatest sin was reduced to ashes; and those women died. The sins of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, that of drinking liquor and of illicit intercourse were reduced to ashes, destroyed by (the confluence of) Kubjā with Revā. Those that

died on the bank of the river, were, O noble one, gone. Know that swan to be Mānasa (lake) which accompanied the sixtyeight very holy places (moving) in the form of swans. Hear from me the names of the four black swans: Prayāga, Puṣkara, the excellent Arghatīrtha, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth one. All the four destroy sins. These four Holy Places, overcome with (the sin of) the murder of brāhmaṇas, went sadly to holy places, O you highly intelligent one. O son, the terrible sin of them, who were (thus) wandering, did not go away. They were indeed purified at the confluence of Kubjā (with Revā), and were freed from their sins. It is said that in front of Indra Prayāga became the king of all the meritorious holy places, (as he was) approved of by them. Let (other) holy places roar as long as the Revā is not seen as destroying sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Revā is greatly meritorious and very blessed at the conjunction with Meghanāda and the big confluence; Revā is not obtainable everywhere. She is difficult to be reached by men at Oṃkāra, Bhṛgukṣetra, and at her confluence with Narmadā and Kubjā, and by best gods at Māhiṣmatī. She is meritorious at her confluence with Viṭaṅkā, at Śrīkaṇṭha and Maṅgaleśvara. Revā, full of the merit of gods is not obtainable everywhere. A man is happy there, where (Revā) the mother of holy places, the great goddess and the destroyer of heaps of sins (flows) between the two banks. A man obtains the fruit of the horse-sacrifice by just one bath (in Revā).

36b-37. I have told you all this that you asked for, and that removes all sins, that is holy, giving salvation to those who listen to it.

Having spoken thus the very intelligent (Kuñjala) spoke to his third son.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Vijvala Narrates His Experience

Kuñjala said:

1-2. O Vijvala, what thing not seen before and full of wonder did you, while wandering on the earth, see ? Tell me that, O you of a good vow. O best son, tell me which country did you go to with a strenuous effort for (obtaining) food; (tell me) what wonder you noticed.

Vijvala said:

3-6. On the surface of mountain Meru there is a forest by name Ānanda. It is abounding in divine trees, always full of fruits and flowers; it is crowded with groups of gods, and is attended by sages and siddhas, and also by beautiful celestial damsels, gandharvas, kinnaras and serpents; (it is full of) wells, ponds, lakes, rivers and streams. The holy forest Ānanda shines with divine objects, aeroplanes numbering in crores and resembling swans, kunda flowers and the moon. It is full of the mixed and sweet sounds of songs, and resounds with the thunders of clouds.

7-10. It is everywhere sweet due to the humming of bees. It is covered with sandal trees, mango trees and blossomed campaka trees. In this way that excellent Ānanda forest shines with many trees; and due to the notes of various birds it is full of a mixed sound. There I saw the very beautiful Ānanda forest like this. O father, a clean lake (i.e. lake with clean water) shines like an ocean (in the forest). It is full of auspicious water, and is crowded with auspicious aquatic animals, fragrant with lotuses and is full of swans and ducks.

11-12a. Thus in the centre of the forest there is a lake, adorned with crowds of gods and hosts of sages. It shines well with kinnaras, serpents, gandharvas and bards.

12b-26. O father, there I saw a wonder. It cannot be described. (A man) shone there with a divine aeroplane, shining with an umbrella, a staff and banners and full of all pleasures and with pitchers, O best one. O you of the best vow, he, the shining

one, was being praised by gandharvas, celestial nymphs and great sages. (None else) like him was seen; (he was) matchless in form in the world, with his entire body looking charming with ornaments, and round his neck a necklace made of big gems shone. I saw a beautiful lady standing near him. She was (adorned) with golden necklaces and with armlets and bracelets of pearls, and with divine garments and smearings of sandal. The man being praised and sung came there. The lady had the form of Rati, had fine hips, and plump buttocks and breasts. Due to the excellence of her form she was shining like that with ornaments. I saw these two, having the sweetness of form and beauty and endowed with all charm, coming there. The two noble ones—the man and the lady—having lotus-like eyes, got down from the aeroplane, came near the lake, and bathed there, O father. The couple having large weapons seized each other and like them the dead bodies of the two had fallen on the bank of the lake. The dead bodies were like the two—the man and the lady—of lotus-like eyes that were (seen) at Prabhāsa, even in form, O illustrious one. The dead body resembling a godly form, was like the man. The form of it was seen just like him. The other dead body had a form as was (that of) the wife. She then cut off the flesh from the female dead body and ate the (pieces of) flesh covered with blood. The man, being very eager, also ate the flesh of the dead body.

27-33a. The two, oppressed with hunger, ate the flesh of the two (dead bodies). They ate the flesh till they were satisfied. O father, then drinking the water in (i.e. of) the lake, the two became happy. Remaining there for some time they again went by the aeroplane. O father, I also saw there two other females. These two females were endowed with beauty and grace and had pleasing characteristics. When the two (i.e. the husband and the wife) were eating the flesh in the great forest, the two females laughed very loudly. When I was seeing (i.e. in my very presence) the two everyday ate the flesh after taking bath etc. O noble one, the other two females, having terrible forms, with their mouths fearful due to fangs, and very fierce said to them there only: "Give (us), give (us)."

33b-37a. Remaining in the vicinity of the forest I observed like this, O father. The two everyday cut off the flesh and ate it.

The bodies of the corpses (i.e. the dead bodies) again became complete. O father, everyday getting down like this, the two and the other (females) acted as I told (you) before, when I was seeing (i.e. in my presence). At that time, O father, I saw the wonder that took place (there). When O father, you asked me (if) I saw a wonder, I told you all that (I saw) which caused doubt.

37b-43. Through grace and with a pleasing heart tell me (about it). O best twice-born, who is that lotus-eyed one, of a divine form, who came with the lady in an aeroplane? And O noble one, who is that lady that ate that large (quantity of) flesh? Who is that (man) and who is that (lady) that came there and ate (the flesh)? Tell us (i.e. me), O father, about the other females that laughed at that time and said: "Give (us), give (us)". You tell me about these two very fearful females. O father, O you of a good vow, please remove this doubt of me.

Saying so the bird ceased (speaking). That (Kuñjala) thus asked by his third son Vijvala told him all account of Cyavana. So listen (to it).

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

In Praise of Making Gift of Food

Kuñjala said:

1. O son, listen, I shall tell you the reason why the two became the eaters of their own flesh.

2-12a. There is no doubt that everywhere (i.e. for everything) auspicious or inauspicious act is the cause. O son, a man enjoys happiness due to a meritorious deed; and due to a sinful deed he suffers. A man should undertake a deed after having pondered over the subtle path by means of the eye of the knowledge of scriptures, and also after having repeatedly well thought over the coarse path of conduct with an accurate mind (i.e. thought), as,

O son, an artist, fashioning images, produces elegance (in them) by means of the lustre of the fire and flames all round. A metal, heated by fire would slowly turn into a liquid. O child, undoubtedly the kind of form produced is similar to the kind of food, perfect with taste, that is poured down. A deed is enjoyed in the same way as it is done. It is the deed that is the principal thing and that alone proceeds in the form of rain. O child there is no doubt that the farmer enjoys (i.e. reaps) the fruit as he sows the seed in the fields. (A man) enjoys in the same way as he performs a deed. Deed is the cause of his destruction. All of us are controlled by (the fruits of) our deeds. We are the heirs of our deeds and the kinsmen related to our deeds in the world. It is the deeds that prompt a man to pleasure or pain. As gold or silver is poured down (in a liquid form) as the form is (desired), in the same way a being is conceived in accordance with his former deeds.

12b-20. Of the fetus in the womb these five are seen: (span of) life, acts, wealth, learning and death. As the doer does (i.e. fashions different images from) a lump of clay, similarly acts that are performed grasp the doer. A being reached the state of a god or a human being or a beast or a bird or a lower animal or an immobile thing due to his acts only. He always enjoys in accordance with what is done by himself. He, having acquired the bed (in the form) of the womb enjoys pleasure or pain ordained by himself (and due to acts) in the former body (i.e. existence). Even by means of his intelligence or power the best of men is not able to change (the fruits of) the deeds (performed) in the former existence. (Beings) experience pains and pleasures (as a result) of their own deeds. He (i.e. a man) is compelled by self-prompted causes or reasons. As a calf finds his mother from among thousands of cows, in the same way (the fruits of) the deeds—good or bad—which do not perish otherwise than by being experienced follow the doer. Who can change the former deed that is binding ?

21-25a. The (fruit of one's) act runs after one who is running very fast, since the deed done formerly (inheres in the soul of the doer). It stands by one who stands, and follows one who goes (i.e. walks). The deed of one who performs (various acts), makes him act like a shadow. The being and his acts are like

the shadow and the sun which are always mutually well-connected. The objects of senses are diseases; old age etc. are diseases. They later trouble a man who is (already) oppressed by (his) former deeds. He who is to experience pain or pleasure (at a particular place) is always bound there as with a rope, and is forcibly carried (there) by destiny.

25b-30. They say that destiny gives pleasure or pain to beings. Fate is thought of in one way while a person is sleeping or awake (i.e. by a person who is sleeping or awake), and it presents itself in a different way, binds and desires to kill him. It well protects him from weapons, poison and calamities who deserves to be protected. As on the earth seeds, trees, clumps of trees and grass stand and multiply, in the same way the deeds (act) on the soul. As a lamp goes out when the oil (in it) is consumed, so the body of a being perishes with the destruction of the deeds. In the same way philosophers have said that death takes place after the destruction of the deeds. The various diseases of beings are said to be their causes. Therefore, deed is the principal (thing in the case) of beings.

31-34a. One enjoys (the fruit) of the deed which one does (i.e. has done) before. O child, I have told you the meaning of what you had seen and about which you asked me now. Now the two whose terrible deed you saw in the Ānanda forest, are enjoying each other. O child, I shall narrate their movements. Listen to me who am talking. O child, of the creations etc. this is the land of deeds (i.e. where deeds are performed) and other lands are meant for enjoyment. O very intelligent one, having gone into them one enjoys (the fruits of one's deeds).

Sūta said:

34b-37. In the Caula country (lived) a very wise king named Subāhu. He was handsome, virtuous (and) wise. There was none (else) like him. The king was Viṣṇu's devotee, he was highly intelligent and very dear to Viṣṇu's devotees. Meditating on Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) with three kinds of deeds (i.e. of body, mind and speech) he performed all sacrifice like the horse-sacrifice. His family priest was a brāhmaṇa by name Jaimini. He, having called that Subāhu, said these words to him:

38-41a. "O king, give gifts by which happiness is enjoyed. A

man after death goes beyond difficult worlds and crosses (difficulties). By means of gifts one gets happiness and eternal glory. In the world matchless fame is produced by (making) gifts. The doer (of pious deeds) would live in heaven as long as his fame lasts. Therefore, (giving) a gift is said to be difficult to do; it is not at all possible (to make) gifts. Therefore with all efforts men should always give (gifts)."

Subāhu said:

41b-42a. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me which of the two, (giving) gifts or penance, is very difficult to do and which (of the two) gives great fruit after death.

Jaimini said:

42b-46. There is nothing (else) more difficult to do than giving gifts. O king, it is actually seen by people. In the world, leaving (i.e. at the cost of) dear life people prompted by greed enter a sea or a forest for the sake of wealth. Others take to service (of others) which is (nothing but) a dog's life. Similarly some first (take to) farming which is full of harm and which is troublesome. O best among men, to give up that wealth, superior even to one's life, and earned with difficulty, is very difficult, especially that wealth, O great king, which is justly earned.

47-49a. There is no end to (the wealth) given with faith to a deserving recipient. Faith is the daughter of Dharma, a purifying goddess and an emancipator of all. She is Sāvitrī, the mother, and a boat to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Religious merit is accomplished by means of faith and not with heaps of wealth. Indigent sages, having faith, have gone to heaven.

49b-61. O best king, there are many (kinds) of gifts. There is nothing superior to giving food which gives liberation to beings. Therefore, food, along with water, should be given, accompanied by sweet and pleasing words. There is nothing superior to giving food to a proper person with faith and proper rite for emancipation, well-being and happiness and wealth in this and the next world. A man enjoys the fruit of giving only food with a pure heart. He should give a morsel after a morsel, or a handful or of the measure of a prastha. There is no doubt

that the great fruit of that gift becomes inexhaustible. If a man, due to having nothing with him, cannot afford (to give) even a prastha or a handful, he should feed, with faith and devotion, a brāhmaṇa, after approaching him on a parvan-day. O lord of subjects, (by giving) the principal gift of food alone a man, in the next birth, well obtains food and enjoys food. Whatever is devoutly given by men in the former birth, is always enjoyed (by them) after well getting another existence. Those men (who) always give the gift of food to brāhmaṇas, enjoy sweet food and drink; they are (called) givers of food. The sages, who have mastered the Vedas call food as being life (itself), since it is undoubtedly sprung from nectar. He who has given food has given life. O great king, give the gift of food with (great) effort.

Having heard this (i.e. these words) of Jaimini, the king again asked that brāhmaṇa Jaimini, proficient in knowledge:

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Deeds Which Lead to Heaven

Subāhu said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, now explain to me the merits of heaven. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I shall do all this naturally.

Jaimini said:

2-13a. There (i.e. in heaven) are various divine, meritorious, charming pleasure-gardens, full of all objects of desire and beautiful with trees satisfying all desires. (There are) everywhere aeroplanes attended by bevies of celestial nymphs. They are variegated; they move according to the desire (of the occupant); they are controlled (by the occupant). Their colour is like that of the young sun, and they have windows (decked) with pearls. They are white like the moon's orb, and have golden beds and seats. In them meritorious men, richly endowed with all objects of desires, and free from all griefs move as on earth. Non-be-

lievers do not go there. Those who have not conquered their senses do not (go there). Wicked, cruel, ungrateful and proud (people) do not (go) there. Men that are truthful, that remain in penance, that are brave, kind, forgiving, that perform sacrifices, and are given to giving gifts go there. There nobody suffers from a disease, old age; nobody meets with death; nobody suffers from cold or heat. Nobody has hunger, thirst or exhaustion. O king, there are many merits like these and others of heaven. Now listen to the defects that are there. The entire fruit of an auspicious deed is enjoyed there only. The great defect that is said to be (present) there is that much (activity) is not done (i.e. undertaken by the residents). Also there is dissatisfaction on seeing the bright glory of others. There is a sudden fall of them whose mind is full of happiness. The fruit of that deed which is done here is enjoyed there. O king, this is known to be the land of deeds and that the land of fruits.

Subāhu said:

13b-14a. O brāhmaṇa, you have narrated these great defects of heaven. Tell (me) about the worlds that are faultless and eternal.

Jaimini said:

14b-19. O king, there are defects right from the residence of Brahmā. Therefore the wise do not desire to obtain (i.e. to go to) heaven. Above the residence of Brahmā is the highest place of Viṣṇu. They know it to be an auspicious eternal light and as the highest Brahman. Foolish men, who are full of sensual desires, who are attacked (i.e. overcome) by religious hypocrisy, delusion, fear, treachery, anger and greed, do not go there. Good people who do not have the sense of mineness and egotism, who are free from the pairs of the opposite qualities (like pleasure and pain), whose senses are controlled, and who are engaged in profound meditation, go there. I have told you all this that you have asked me about.

Having thus heard the merits of heaven, Subāhu, the lord of the earth, asked the noble Jaimini, the best among speakers:

Subāhu said:

20-23a. O sage, I shall not go to heaven; I do not also desire (to go there). I shall not do that act by which there is a fall. O noble one, charity alone is (everything). Certainly when shall I not give? A man falls from it (i.e. heaven) because of (giving) gifts and desire for (their) fruits.

Having said so, that religious-minded Subāhu, the lord of the earth, (again spoke): "By means of profound meditation I shall worship that lord of gods (i.e. Viṣṇu), dear to Lakṣmī. I shall go to Viṣṇu's heaven which is free from tormentation and destruction."

Jaimini said:

23b-30a. O king, you have spoken the truth, which is full of all bliss. Kings are virtuous and they worship with great sacrifices. O prince, in sacrifices all (kinds of) gifts are given. In the sacrifices, they first give food, garments, tāmbūla, gold, and also give the gift of land and cows. Those best men go to Viṣṇu's world by means of good sacrifices. Kings are satisfied by (giving) gifts and are pleased. The noble devout ones always perform sacrifices, after having asked for good (i.e. sumptuous) alms and (after) having come to their own places. O king, (then) it (i.e. the food) is divided into parts for (distributing it) as alms. These (men) with penance as their wealth, O you very intelligent one, give one part to a brāhmaṇa, and one to those who are very near. Due to the gift of that food men enjoy (its) fruit. Free from hunger and thirst, they go to Viṣṇu's world.

30b-32. Therefore, O best king, you (should) also give the wealth earned justly. Having acquired knowledge from (having given) gifts, one will obtain perfection from (that) knowledge. That man who would listen to this meritorious and excellent account, will obtain all objects and all his sin melts away. Free from all sins, he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Good and Bad Deeds and the Fate of the Performer

Subāhu said :

1. Please tell me by (performing) which deeds men go to hell after death, (and) by (performing) which deeds they go to heaven after death.

Jaimini said :

2-5. Those brāhmaṇas who give up (leading) a brāhmaṇa's life and deluded by greed live on bad deeds go to hell. Atheists, those who have violated the norms of (good conduct), those who are intent upon (satisfying) sexual pleasures, religious hypocrites, and who are ungrateful go to hell. Men who do not give wealth to brāhmaṇas after having promised them, and also those who take away a brāhmaṇa's wealth go to hell. Wicked men, those who insult others, who tell lies and talk irrelevantly go to hell.

6. Those who snatch away the wealth of others, those who indicate others' faults and those who are adulterers go to hell.

7. Those who are always engaged in harming the life of beings and those who are engaged in reviling others go to hell.

8. Those who break good wells, lakes, places of water for travellers, or ponds go to hell.

9. Those who become averse to their wives, children, servants and guests and those who have abolished worship of dead ancestors and deities go to hell.

10. O king, those who censure the fourth stage in the life of a brāhmaṇa, or who censure the stages of life or who censure their friends go to hell.

11-13. Those who do not meditate upon Viṣṇu, the first (supreme) being, and the ruler and great lord of all the worlds; those who spoil the (principal sacrificial ceremonies like) Prayāja, or sacrifices or virgins or harm their friends or good people or the elders go to hell. Those who block the way with logs of wood or pegs or deserted stones go to hell.

14. Those who have no trust in all beings, who are always struck by desire of sensual enjoyments and are crooked towards all beings go to hell.

15-16. Those who prohibit brāhmaṇas who are badly off and who have come (to them) for food, those men who cut off a sacred place, (somebody's) livelihood or house, or affection or hope go to hell.

17-20a. O king of kings, those who make weapons, lances and bows, and those who sell (these) go to hell. Those fools who do not show pity for a helpless or a frightened or a miserable person or one afflicted with disease or an old man, those who first take up vows and later not controlling their senses violate them through fickleness go to hell. O king, I have thus told you about those who go to hell.

20b-23. (Now) learn from me about them who go to heaven. Those men who follow religion with the practice of truth, penance, forgiveness, charity or study go to heaven. Those high-minded ones who are engrossed in sacrifices and exclusively devoted to worshipping deities and those who approve of (these) go to heaven. The pure men who, exclusively devoted to Viṣṇu, recite and sing (hymns about) Viṣṇu in a pure place go to heaven.

24. Those men who respectfully always serve their mother and father and avoid sleeping by day go to heaven.

25. Those men who are averse to all (kinds of) harm, who have the company of the good, who are engaged in the well-being of all go to heaven.

26. Those men who are free from (all kinds of) greed and who help all, who give refuge to all go to heaven.

27. Those men who give respect to their elders by means of service and penance and who are averse to accepting (any gift) go to heaven.

28. Those men who clothe (i.e. give garments to) thousands, similarly those who give (in or) to thousands, and those who protect thousands go to heaven.

29. Those men who free beings from fear, sin, suffering, grief and who free (from poverty and disease) those who are emaciated due to poverty and disease go to heaven.

30. O you born in the family of Bharata, those wise men who

possess similarity with Brahman, who, though being young, have conquered their senses go to heaven.

31. O you descendant of Bharata, those men who give gold, cows and land, and food and garments also go to heaven.

32. Those men who are delighted when implored, and who talk agreeable (words) after having given (what is asked for), and those who have given up the fruit of what is given go to heaven.

33. Those men who themselves produce houses, grains and heroes and present them (to others) go to heaven, O hero.

34. Those men who never speak about the faults even of their enemies and (on the contrary) describe their virtues go to heaven.

35. Those men who are not distressed through jealousy on seeing the wealth of others, but are delighted and congratulate (them) go to heaven.

36. Those noble men who conform to the norms laid down in the Veda and the scriptures while engaged in work or abstaining from work go to heaven.

37. Those men, who do not speak disagreeable words to people, (but, on the contrary) speak agreeable words only go to heaven.

38. Those men who (even though) oppressed with hunger, thirst and fatigue share (their grains etc.) with others and make offerings to guests go to heaven.

39. Those men who construct reservoirs of water, wells, and water booths for travellers, houses and gardens go to heaven.

40. Those men who are truthful (i.e. behave truthfully) with liars, who are straightforward with the crooked, who are friendly even with their enemies go to heaven.

41. Those men who, being born in whatever family, have many sons, live for a hundred years, are kind and of a good behaviour go to heaven.

42. Those men who always make their days religiously productive and who always take up a vow go to heaven.

43. Those men who with their minds tranquil and control-

led look with equanimity upon a person shouting abuses or praising them go to heaven.

44. Those men who protect fear-stricken brāhmaṇas, women or pilgrims go to heaven.

45. Those men who offer balls of rice to their dead ancestors at obsequial ceremonies or śrāddhas performed on the Ganges or at the holy place of Puṣkara or especially at Gayā go to heaven.

46. Those men who are not under the sway of their senses, who remain controlled, who have given up greed, fear and anger go to heaven.

47. Those men who protect like their own sons, insects like lice, bugs or gadflies that prick the body go to heaven.

48. Those men (though) not knowing (the procedure) collect (wealth) according to the rule as told (in the scriptures) and who put up with all the pairs (of opposites) (like pleasure and pain) go to heaven.

49. Those pure and good men who do not dally with others' wives physically, mentally or in speech go to heaven.

50. Those men who do not perform prohibited deeds but do only those that are enjoined (in the scriptures) and who know their inherent power go to heaven.

51-52. O king, I have thus accurately told you everything as to how misfortune or good fortune is obtained by means of deeds. A man who behaves unpleasantly with others goes to a fierce, very terrible hell. For a man who always behaves agreeably, salvation, causing pleasure, is not far away.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

Subāhu Eats His Own Flesh

Kuñjala said:

1. The king, having heard all the result of good and bad conduct as told by the sage at that time, said to the sage:

Subāhu said:

2. O best brāhmaṇa, that I (who am thus advised by you) will practise righteousness; I shall (do) meritorious (acts); O sage, I shall very much worship Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu), the source of the world.

3-6. The king would worship (i.e. worshipped) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) by performing sacrifices and muttering prayers. He, having performed a sacrifice, and having practised penance, and being endowed with all desired objects gladly and quickly reached Viṣṇu's heaven (along with the queen). Having gone there he did not (i.e. could not) see the lord of gods in that great world. Great hunger arose in them, and great thirst proceeded (i.e. they felt extremely hungry and thirsty) which very much troubled their soul. The king too oppressed by hunger and thirst along with his wife and full of great grief did not see Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

7-14. O best one, the king, along with his wife, was thus very much grieved, was perturbed and perplexed and was very much oppressed by hunger. That lord of the earth, speedily ran hither and thither. That king, with his entire body adorned with ornaments, decorated with garments and sandal (-paste applied to his body), with his body (looking) lovely on account of garlands of flowers, and with necklaces, earrings, and bracelets, and with his limbs (looking) elegant due to the lustre of jewels, moved. Thus, proceeding unhappily, being praised by bards, and full of sorrow and affliction he said (these) words to his wife: "O you very auspicious one, O you beautiful lady, being praised by the sages, I have, along with you, reached Viṣṇu's heaven in an aeroplane. Due to which act (of mine) great hunger springs (in me); and (even) after having reached Viṣṇu's world I have not seen (i.e. I have not been able to see) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). O good one, what (then) is the cause due to which I am not enjoying the great fruit (of my good deeds)? This unhappiness has arisen due to (my) own deeds." Having thus heard his words, she said to the king:

The wife said:

15-19a. O king, you have said the truth. There is no fruit

of good conduct, (though) the meritorious and noble brāhmaṇas declare in the Vedas, sacred texts and Purāṇas that a man merely by the utterance of the names of Viṣṇu, the holder of the good (i.e. powerful) disc, casts off his grief and affliction, and becomes free from all blemishes. You did propitiate the god, the holder of the conch, disc, and mace; but you did not give food to brāhmaṇas, as told by them. I understand that its fruit is that you have not seen (i.e. you could not see) Viṣṇu. O king, hunger is troubling me; thirst also would dry me up.

Kuñjala said:

19b-26a. Thus addressed by his wife, the king had his senses confounded due to anxiety. Then he saw a holy hermitage, which removed fatigue, which was crowded with divine trees, which looked beautiful with lakes, and with wells, pools and tanks full of holy water, which was crowded with swans and ducks and which looked charming with white lotuses. O son, the hermitage was splendid by the presence of philosopher-sages. (He saw) the hermitage, which was crowdel with divine trees and which looked beautiful with herds of deer. It was abounding in various flowers; it was full of agreeable fragrance; it was crowded with brāhmaṇas and siddhas; it was full of the disciples of sages; it was adorned with hosts of gods; it looked beautiful with throngs of the clusters of plantain trees having abundant fruits. It was full of many kinds of trees and was endowed with all desired objects; it was always beautiful with sandal (trees) having pleasing fragrance and with fruits.

26b-33. That king Subāhu entered with his wife that very meritorious forest satisfying desires, which was thus full of merit and had the characteristics of austerity. There was the best sage Vāmadeva, the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, brightening all the directions like the sun, shining like the sun with very great lustre, sitting in a posture suited to profound and abstract meditation and covered with a cloth used at the time of profound and abstract meditation, and meditating upon Viṣṇu, the giver of enjoyments and salvation. Having seen that noble Vāmadeva, the best of the sages, he quickly went with his wife to him, and saluted him. Then Vāmadeva having seen the best king bent before him, having greeted the king accompanied by his

wife with blessings, seated the best Subāhu on an auspicious seat and the sage (thus) honoured the king that had arrived with his wife, with a seat etc., (honoured him) by giving him water for washing his feet and respectful offerings. Then the great devotee of Viṣṇu asked the king:

Vāmadeva said:

34-35a. O lord of kings, by means of my divine knowledge I know you to be knowing the Vaiṣṇava practices, to be a devotee of Viṣṇu and to be the best man, and to be the lord of Cola. You, the guileless one, have come here with your wife Tārkṣyā.

The king said :

35b-39a. I, the guileless one, have come here, and have reached the highest place of Viṣṇu. With great devotion I have propitiated Viṣṇu, the god of gods, the lord of the world, who is pleased with devotion. O father, why do I not see the lord of gods, the husband of Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī)? Hunger is troubling me, so also very poignant thirst (is troubling me), O father. Due to them we two (i.e. my wife and I) are not obtaining peace and are not at all having happiness. O best sage, this is the cause of my unhappiness. Do me a favour and be well disposed (and) tell me the cause (of this).

Vāmadeva said:

39b-51a. O lord of kings, you are always devoted to Śrīkṛṣṇa. With great devotion you have propitiated Viṣṇu by means of devoted service, by bathing (his idol) and by means of sandal, flowers etc. also. (But) you have not honoured the lord of the worlds with offerings of eatables and fruits. When you reached the tenth day (of the month, i.e. when the tenth day arrived) you have always done (this viz.) you have not given identical good food to brāhmaṇas. Having reached the eleventh day (i.e. when the eleventh day came), you did not take food. You did not give food to a brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu. Food always remains in the form of nectar on the earth. Especially you have never made a present of food. O king, herbs are of various kinds. Listen to them: (They are) bitter, pungent, astringent, sweet, sour and saline; there are condiments like Asafoetida, and they are of

various forms, O king. All herbs causing nourishment have sprung up from nectar. Food alone, after consecrating it with Vedic hymns, and accompanied by herbal sauces is given with an intention of dedicating it to gods in the form of Viṣṇu and the manes in the form of Viṣṇu, into the hand of a brāhmaṇa. Then after giving it to the guests one should feed his attendants. After that he himself eats the food rrsembling nectar. O king, he has no grief after death, but has happiness. O king, brāhmaṇas are manes, and gods have the form of kṣatriyas. O king, as a farmer always carries on good agriculture, in the same way a man should do agriculture in the field of the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. He should cleave it with the plough of his innate disposition and with the weapon of faith.

51b-54. Similarly intellect and penance are always looked upon as the bulls. His truthfulness, knowledge and prowess are the controller and his pure soul is the whip. He should give it up with salutations into the great field in the form of a brāhmaṇa, O king, as a farmer, engaged in an assiduous effort in farming, cleaves, dirt, in the same way, one who desires (to reach) Viṣṇu should propitiate (him). Similarly with good, meritorious words he should please brāhmaṇas also.

55-60. O king, as a farmer desiring to sow (seeds) when the cloud showers would sow (seeds), in the same way on a parvan day or at a holy place (a present) is given to a brāhmaṇa who is pleased. O great king, as a farmer enjoys the fruit of the seed sown by him, similarly a giver enjoys the fruit (of the gift given by him). He always becomes satisfied after death (i.e. in the next world) and here (i.e. in this world) (by giving a gift and) not in any other way. Brāhmaṇas are manes and gods are of the nature of fields; there is no doubt about this. So when presents are offered to them in a sacrifice, they certainly give fruits of that nature. There is no doubt about this. O king, sweet things would not spring from bitter ones; in the same way bitter things would not be produced from the ones that are known as sweet. One gets the fruit as one sows the seed. He who does not sow (seeds in) the field, does not get its fruit.

61-65. Similarly, O king, brāhmaṇas, gods and manes of the nature of a field, present the fruit of what is given. There is no doubt about it. O king, enjoy (the fruit of) your good or bad

deeds in the same manner as you have done them. That cannot be otherwise. Formerly you never gave with a good mind (i.e. sincerely) sweet food and drink. You yourself enjoyed good purified eatables, food, articles of food that are sucked and drinks and (other) articles of food; but you never gave these (to brāhmaṇas etc.). You nourished your own body with food resembling nectar. O great king, since you did (this), therefore hunger has been produced (in you).

66-72a. O king, (one's) deeds are the cause of (one's) happiness and unhappiness, (so also) of one's birth and death. O illustrious one, enjoy the fruit of those deeds. Formerly also noble souls reached heaven due to their deeds. After the exhaustion of (the fruit of) the deeds according to their destiny, they have again gone to (i.e. born on) the earth. Nala, Bhagīratha, so also Viśvāmitra and Yudhiṣṭhira obtained (i.e. reached) heaven by means of their deeds according to their destiny. The former deeds are destined to bear fruit; and due to them one would get happiness or unhappiness. O king, which lord (even) is able to resist it? Therefore, O greatest king, you had the affliction due to hunger and thirst, even though you have come to heaven. Therefore, (it is presumed that) your deeds were bad. If, O best king, you desire to satisfy your hunger, then go and eat your own body lying in the Ānanda forest. This your great queen also seems to be very much emaciated due to hunger.

Subāhu said:

72b-74a. O glorious one, how long have I to do that act along with my wife? (Please) tell me that. When will the grace of (Viṣṇu) be perceived? O best sage, which religious merit would be obtained by giving which gift? O you highly intelligent one, tell me that if you are pleased now.

Vāmadeva said:

74b-87a. O you very intelligent one, great happiness is obtained by the gift of food (and) of water. Mortals enjoy heaven and are not at all harassed by their sins. When men might not have given gifts (during their life-time), all (men) give gifts at the time of death. (Therefore) right from the first (a man) should

give food with water. He who would offer (these) eight (kinds of) gifts (like) a good umbrella, shoes, a good vessel for (storing) water, land, pure gold, does not feel hungry or thirsty etc. in heaven. O king, by giving food hunger does not oppress (the giver, since) he is satisfied. His thirst is not acute, (since) he is fully satisfied. O king, the giver by giving the gifts of sandals and an umbrella obtains shade, and by giving shoes he obtains a vehicle, O best king. Thus I am telling something else. O noble one, by giving the gift of land he would obtain all his desired objects. O great king, by giving a cow one would always prosper with desires (i.e. desired objects). The man enjoying all pleasures would live in heaven. There is no doubt that the giver (of a cow) becomes satisfied by giving a cow. He is free from diseases, is endowed with pleasures, is content, and possesses wealth. Due to the gift of gold he becomes (a man) of good complexion; there is no doubt about it. A man would become rich, handsome, heroic, and enjoyer of gems. He who gives sesamum seeds when the time of death has come, becomes the lord of all enjoyments and goes to Viṣṇu's world. Thus by special gifts great happiness in obtained. O lord of kings, when you were alive, you did not give a cow (or) land (or) food and water to a brāhmaṇa. You did not give (any of these objects) even at the time of death. Therefore hunger has arisen in you.

87b-88a. Thus I have told you the cause that arose due to your deeds. As a deed is done so it (i.e. its fruit) is enjoyed.

Subāhu said:

88b-90a. O best sage, how will my hunger be satiated? My body, parched up with it is extremely afflicted. O best brāhmaṇa, tell us too about our hunger and about the atonement for our terrible deeds, so that I shall have peace.

Vāmadeva said:

90b-93a. O best king, there is no other atonement than eating (your own bodies). Relying on your own exertions you will enjoy all the fruit of these deeds. O king, from here you should go (there) where your body fell, so also of your wife. There is no doubt about it. O king, both of you, you and your wife, should

eat up your own inexhaustible body. There is no doubt about this.

The king said:

93b-94a. O noble one, advise me about the measure (i.e. the length of) time as to how long I, with my wife, have to eat (up our own bodies).

Vāmadeva said:

94b-95. When you will hear the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva, destroying great sins, you will obtain meritorious salvation. O king, I have told you all this. Go and eat up (your own body).

96-113. Hearing (the words) like this, the king, along with his wife ate up the flesh of his own body. Everyday like that (i.e. as already told) the body again would become (i.e. became) full, O very intelligent one. O son, the king and the queen ate up (the flesh) of their (own bodies). As the king went on eating (his own) body, the two ladies laughed. I shall tell you about their temperament. With (Śraddhā) very chaste Prajñā laughed at the behaviour of the king. The imperishable Śraddhā (also) always laughed at him. Being urged by Prajñā, you did not give with reverence food to brāhmaṇas after dedicating it to Viṣṇu. In this way (the king) everyday ate up the flesh of his own body. His wife also ate up her own body with nectar-like taste. O you of a good vow, then at the end of a hundred years, he, remembering the great sage Vāmadeva, condemned himself. (He said to himself:) 'I never gave (food) to manes and deities and to brāhmaṇas. I did not give (food) to guests, especially to old ones. I did not, through pity, give (food) to the poor and the weak.' Thus condemning his deeds, he ate his own flesh. Then seeing Subāhu, along with his wife, eating (their) own flesh, the two ladies—Prājñā and Śraddhā laughed (at them). His pure soul laughed at the fruit of those deeds. (The soul said:) 'O you of a sinful heart, (even) due to my company and close contact, you did not give (gifts).' Prajñā also with the words, 'O king, where has the great folly, by which you were deluded, gone?' laughed (at him). (A man) is thrown into the ditch of darkness due to greed along with delusion. Having

fallen there, you threw me into a painful peril. O king, having left the path of giving gifts you went to the path of greed. Being very much afflicted by bunger eat along with your wife (the flesh of your own body).' Thus that Prajñā laughed at that Subāhu accompanied by his wife. O son, this is the reason of their laughing. When, O you very wise one, the king was eating (the flesh), the two, viz. hunger and thirst being pained always begged of him and said: 'Give (us), give (us the flesh).' The two asked the lord of kings for food mixed with milk (or water). I have told you all that you had asked me. O you very intelligent one, what else I shall (i.e. should) narrate to you?

Vijvala said:

114. O father, tell me that hymn called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva, by (reciting) which the king would reach salvation—that highest place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Vāsudeva Hymn

Sūta said:

1-7. When the glorious Vijvala uttered these auspicious words, Kuñjala, the best among speakers, told him the auspicious hymn. The hymn in honour of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is recited after meditating upon and saluting Hṛṣīkeśa, who destroys all sufferings and gives entire religious merit. The hymn is called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva; it gives all virtue; it is the gate to salvation; it is possessed of happiness; it gives peace; it enhances nourishment; it gives all desired objects; it gives knowledge and increases knowledge. (Kuñjala) manifested to Vijvala the hymn of Vāsudeva. (The hymn) is called Vāsudeva (-hymn); it is boundless and increases nourishment. Vijvala, the best among birds, having learned it from his father, started to go there (and) asked (the permission of) his father. The religious minded (Kuñjala) said to his son Vijvala who had decided to go, who

had mastered knowledge and who was intent upon obliging (others).

Kuñjala said:

8-9. O son, listen, since I know the great sin of the king, go from here and recite it when Subāhu is overhearing. The more he will hear the excellent hymn the more he will be full of (i.e. he will have) knowledge of Vāsudeva, due to his (i.e. Vāsudeva's) grace. Undoubtedly I have spoken very well.

10-12. Taking leave of his father, Vijvala of a quick pace, flew and then reached the auspicious Ānanda-forest. Resorting to the shade of a tree, he, full of joy, sat (there). Having (formerly) seen the king who had come in an aeroplane (he thought to himself:) 'When will king Subāhu come with his wife? When shall I free him from the sin by means of this hymn ?'

13-14. Just then the aeroplane reached there adorned with a number of small bells, filled with the sound of bells accompanied by lute and flute, full of the sound of gandharvas and having celestial nymphs, rich in all desired objects but without food and water.

15-19. King Subāhu was seated in that plane with his wife. With his wife Sutārkṣyā, he got down from the aeroplane. When he took a sharp weapon and cut off the dead body, Vijvala called out to him: "O best among men, O you resembling gods, you are doing this act which (even) cruel men cannot do. O distinguished man, what is this adverse fate! Tell me the entire reason why you have commenced this evil, rash act, always condemned in the world and opposed to the Vedic practice."

20-24. Having heard these words of the noble Vijvala, the great king said (these) words to his wife: "O dear one, I, of evil acts, have been eating this for a hundred years. Nobody ever spoke like this as he is talking. O dear one, the heart of me who am being thus oppressed by hunger (has become) eager, and gone out; (now) there is peace in (my) heart. O you of a charming smile, when I have heard his words putting an end to my grief, great joy abides in my heart. Who is he? Can he be a gandharva or Indra? The words of sages would come true, since the sage formerly had said (like this)."

25-28a. Having heard these words of her dear (husband), the wife, who was devoted to her husband, then said to the king: "O Lord, you have spoken the truth. This is the greatest wonder. As you have (an idea) in your mind so do I have in my mind. Who is this who having taken up the form of a bird, asks (you) like a benefactor?" Having heard these words of his wife, the lord of the earth, joining the palms of his hands, said (these) words:

Subāhu said:

28b-31a. O you very intelligent lord, welcome to you who have taken up the form of a bird. Along with my wife I am, with (i.e. bowing) my head, saluting both your lotus-like feet. Let us have religious merit through your grace. Who are you that are in the form a bird, talking such good (words)? O best one, (the fruit of) whatever good or bad deed is done by the former body (in a former existence) is enjoyed here only.

31b-33a. Then he told him his account. He heard it (i.e. it was) as it was told by his father Kuñjala. "Tell me the account of you who are talking to me." Then the best bird said these words to Subāhu:

Vijvala said:

33b-36a. My father, Kuñjala by name, was born in the species of parrots. Among his sons, I am the third, Vijvala by name. O you of great arms, I am not a god, not a gandharva, nor am I a siddha. Everyday I am observing (your) very terrible deed. O great king, tell me now how long you will (continue to) do this deed full of violence?

Subāhu said:

36b-38a. When I shall hear the hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn which was formerly recited by the brāhmaṇas, then, O good man, I shall find my own course (to salvation). The sage, of a controlled mind, has said that then I shall be undoubtedly free from my sin.

Vijvala said:

38b-39. For you I asked my father. O best one, listen. I shall tell you the eternal (truth) that he told me: Om, of this hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn, Nārada is (the author); anuṣṭup is the metre. Oṃkāra is the (presiding) deity. I employ (myself) in repeating the prayers for the destruction of all sins and for accomplishing the four goals (of human life). The hymn is: "Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya (My salutation to the holy Vāsudeva).

40-51. I salute Praṇava (i.e. the sacred syllable 'Om') that is purifying, very meritorious, that knows the Vedas, that is the abode of the Vedas, the support of learning, and of existence. I salute the highest Praṇava, which is without an abode, which has no form, which is very bright and very glorious, which is qualityless (yet) connected with qualities. I salute (the Praṇava) that is very lovely, very energetic, that destroys great delusion, that fills all the world, and is beyond qualities. He coming into existence, shines everywhere, and increases prosperity. I salute Śiva (or auspicious) Praṇava that is fearless and connected with mendicants. I salute Praṇava that is the singer of Gāyatrī and Sāman, the song and the one to whom songs are dear; and that enjoys the singing of gandharvas. I salute that Oṃkāra, that is the thought, that is of the form of the Vedas, that remains in the sacrifice and that is affectionate towards the devotees, and that is the origin of the entire world. I salute that Praṇava (in the form of) Hari, which, manifesting itself in the form of a boat, is the emancipator of all beings drowning in the ocean of the worldly existence. I salute that auspicious Praṇava (or Praṇava in the form of Śiva), which, living in many ways in the same form in all the worlds, is the abode in the form of salvation. I salute (that Praṇava) which is subtle (nay), subtler, pure, qualityless, the principal quality, which is free from unrefined states, and which is the abode of the Vedas (or of which Vedas are the abode). I salute that Oṃkāra which is always free from the losses of gods and demons and (is full of) contentment; and which is being meditated upon by gods and meditating saints. I salute Praṇava, the lord, which is (all-)pervading, which is omniscient, which is the highest pure knowledge, which is Śiva (or pure), which has auspicious qualities, and which is tranquil. I salute (that Praṇava),

having entered whose illusion, gods and demons like Brahmā, do not find the very pure gate of salvation.

52-78. (My) salutation to that very lustrous, pure, Vāsudeva, the bulb of joy, of pure intelligence, and the lord of the demigods. I always seek the refuge of the lord, who is shining with the Pāñcajanya (conch), with the Sudarśana (disc) lustrous like the sun and with (his) mace and lotus. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva who is concealed by the Vedas, who is possessed of qualities and is the support of qualities and of the movable and the immovable, whose lustre is like that of fire and the sun. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the receptacle of hunger, pure and handsome, shining with joy and respect, reaching whom all the worlds (like those of) gods, live. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, bright and lustrous like the sun, who destroys with his own rays masses of darkness, who is always the object of worship. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who shines everywhere (and) causes drying up with his sunlike lustres and gives water, and who is the internal air of living beings. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, the god of gods, sustains, according to his will, all worlds and all kins, and acts like a boat in helping (beings) to cross (the ocean of the mundane existence). I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, full of the worlds, is always present (in bodies) of the mobile and the immobile, and digests (food) with the mouth of Svāhā, and is the cause of the host of gods. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the pleasant one and the giver of qualities in the world, who with all very good saps, nourishes, with pure lustre, foods. That (Vāsudeva), the cause of destruction, the refuge of all, full of everything and complete is present everywhere. He enjoys the objects of sense without the organs of sense. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. He then sustains, with his own form, the mobile and immobile worlds—his own forms. He is utterly perfect, full of knowledge and very pure. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. I seek the shelter of that Vāsudeva—the destroyer of the demons, the root (cause) of the destruction of misery, the tranquil, the highest, the huge one, full of power, reaching whom the gods become humble. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) happiness, the limit of happiness, the giver of happiness, the lord of gods, the ocean of knowledge, the protector of sages, the chief of gods, the prop of truth,

and practising the virtue of truth. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) of the form of the sacrificial requisites, who is of the nature of the highest truth, (who is) endowed with the cosmic power, the lord of Lakṣmī, (who is) fierce (yet) auspicious, (who) alone (is) knowledge, and (who is) the abode of the worlds. His bed is in the ocean. He sleeps on the huge hood of snake (i.e. Śeṣa). I everyday salute the holy couple of the lotus-like feet of that Vāsudeva. The two feet of the holy Vāsudeva are full of merit, confer happiness, are always being attended upon by the holy places, andthey remove sins. I always salute the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāsudeva which resemble large red lotuses, have the good marks of lotuses, are fit for conquest, and are adorned with the prints of anklets. I always salute the holy feet of the holy Vāsudeva, which are always devoutly praised by gods, good siddhas, sages and lords of serpents. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, by bathing in the water of whose feet, sages, being purified and freed from sins and well-pleased, obtain salvation. There are always (present) holy places like the Ganges where the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu remains. Those with their bodies (stained) by fierce sins, sprinkled with the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. I always salute the two feet of that highest lord only. Men obtain the fruit of the holy Vājapeya (sacrifice) on having properly eaten the offering of eatables (done in honour) of the noble (Viṣṇu), the holder of the great disc; and they become endowed with all (desired) objects. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of hells, free from illusion, perfect and knowing (i.e. appreciating) virtues, by meditating upon whom men obtain a good course (i.e. salvation). With devotion I salute the good, excellent, sanctifying couple of the feet of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) who is saluted by hosts of sages, siddhas and bards, who is always worshipped by gods, who is the chief, first lord i.e. Brahmā in bringing about the creation of the universe, and who is the affectionate emancipator of him who has fallen into the great ocean of the worldly existence. I salute the extremely purifying couple of the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) that removed, with the auspicious glances, the sin of Bali, and who was seen singing the Sāmans in the sacrificial hall by hosts of gods and who, the only lord of the three worlds and eager to sing Sāmanas (was

seen) by the groups of gods. I salute that lord Vāmana, shining in the group of brāhmaṇas at the head of the satrifice, adorned with Brahmanic glory, full of rays with bright divine lustre resembling a sapphire, and imploring for the good of gods, that good son of Vairocana (as:) 'Give me (the land covered by my) three steps.' I praise the matchless stride of the lord, the holder of the good disc, to see which (stride) in the orb of the sun, which covered the heaven in the interval between the setting of the moon and the sun, the groups of sages reached heaven, and became merged into his body—the big sheath of the universe."

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

God Viṣṇu Appears to Subāhu

Viṣṇu said:

1-5. The king, on hearing the hymn which was pure, very ancient, which removed sins, which was full of merit and auspicious, which was blessed, which contained good words, which was greatly fit to be muttered, became happy. His great thirst, along with his hunger, vanished. The lord of the earth became like a god. His wife also shone. Both of them, freed from the bondage of sin, became endowed with good form. That god, the holder of the auspicious conch, disc, lotus, mace and sword, surrounded by great gods, brāhmaṇas, great siddhas full of the devotion of Hari came to the king whose sins had vanished. The holy Nārada, Bhārgava, Vyāsa (came there). The son of Mṛkaṇḍa (also) came there. The sage Vālmīki, Viṣṇu's devotee, (so also) Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahmā, came there. The illustrious Garga, full of devotion for Viṣṇu, Jābāli and Raibhya, so also Kaśyapa, (all) dear to Viṣṇu, and best among the followers of Viṣṇu, came there with Viṣṇu.

6-8a. They (who were) meritorious and very blessed, (who were) free from sins, (who were) full of devotion for the lotus-like feet of Hari, stood there, surrounding Hari, and praised the king in various ways. All gods led by Fire, so also Brahmā and

Hari* and very divine goddesses (came there). Good singers like the gandharva-king sang divinely, sweetly and charmingly. Sages praised him with very auspicious hymns from the Vedas and furnished with the most sublime truth.

8b-11. Seeing the lord, the king, god Viṣṇu spoke (these) charming words: "O king, ask for the desired boon; I shall grant it to you, since you have pleased me." The king, hearing the words of Viṣṇu, a blue lotus (in complexion), the destroyer of Mura, the lord holding the conch, disc, sword and mace, the highest lord accompanied by Lakṣmī and bright with gems, adorned with bracelets and necklaces, bright like the sun, well attended upon by gods, well adorned with ornaments like costly necklaces, (with his body) besmeared with very divine sandal (pastes), and talking in front of him, went down to the earth (i.e. prostrated before Viṣṇu) with great devotion.

12-16. The great king constantly saluted (Hari) with prostrations and with the words: "Victory to you. I am your slave, your servanta, always (standing) before you. I do not know either devotion or best manners. O Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), protect me, who have, along with my wife, sought your refuge. O Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), those men who are always engrossed in meditation upon you, are blessed. From here they, being extremely pure, and uttering (your names) Bhava, Mādhava, go to Vaikuṇṭha. Those men who carry on their head the pure water coming out (i.e. flowing from) your lotus-like feet, have (certainly) bathed in the water coming from all holy places. They go to the good abode of Hari. I do not have deep and abstract meditation. I do not have knowledge. I do not have any exertion. Due to (my) contact with what (kind of) religious merit are you granting me a boon ?"

Hari said:

17-18. O king, there is no doubt that you are getting salvation because you heard from the pure and sinless Vijvala, the great sin-destroying (hymn) called Vāsudeva (-hymn). In my world enjoy divine pleasures according to your desire.

The king said:

19. O god, if I, a poor person, am to be granted a boon, then first give an excellent boon to Vijvala.

*Obviously a misprint. It should be Hara (god Śiva).

Hari said:

20-22. O king, Vijvala's father Kuñjala, adorned with knowledge, everyday recites the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva. With his sons and wife, he will go to my abode. He always mutters this hymn; (so) I shall give him (its) fruit.

When these auspicious words were said (by Viṣṇu), the king spoke to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O Keśava, make this very auspicious hymn fruitful."

Hari said:

23-30. O great king, when, in the Kṛtayuga, men will praise (me with this hymn), they will undoubtedly go to (i.e. obtain) salvation (just) at that moment. O best king, those men who would mutter this hymn (in honour) of Viṣṇu, leading to salvation, for just three months in Tretāyuga, for six months in Dvāparayuga, and for a year in Kaliyuga, go to heaven. A brāhmaṇa who mutters it thrice or once (a day), gets whatever is desired by him. A kṣatriya, adorned with wealth and grains, gets victory. A viaiśya will be rich; a śūdra will be happy. He who relates this to a man of an inferior tribe, becomes free from sin. The hearer never sees (i.e. goes to) a terrible hell; and due to the grace of my hymn he will have accomplished everything. The manes of him who will recite it (i.e. get it recited) by brāhmaṇas at the time of a śrāddha, will go to Viṣṇu's heaven after being satisfied. A brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya should mutter (this hymn) at the end of presenting libations to the manes of the dead ancestors. His manes, with their minds pleased, drink nectar.

31-36a. If a man devoutly mutters this at the time of offering oblations to gods in a sacrifice, no difficulties come up there (i.e. in the sacrifice), and he will accomplish everything. One should utter this hymn in a danger in a difficult place, or in danger from a fierce tiger, or when danger from thieves has come up. O great king, that (danger etc.) will be removed. There is no doubt about it. At other auspicious (times) or when a man has gone, to the gate of a royal palace he mutters (i.e. should mutter) the hymn called Vāsudeva (-hymn) for ten thousand times. Well-

bathed, free from anger and greed, with his mind controlled, a man should, with chastity, offer a sacrifice with sesamum-seeds, rice mixed with ghee of the measure of one-tenth (of them), after having worshipped Vāsudeva. Then men should offer a sacrifice to the hymn of praise.

36b. Like a good servant I never leave their side.

37-38a. When Kaliyuga has come (the recital) will give servitude to the hymn (i.e. the hymn will be a servant). It is (i.e.) should not be given to any one indiscriminately for fear of the) violation of (the sacredness of) the Vedas. He will be rich with all his desired objects here (i.e. in this world) only.

38b-42a. O king, listen, I have made this hymn fruitful. It was fashioned (i.e. composed) by Brahmā. Formerly it was muttered by Rudra. He was free from (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Indra also was free from sin. So also were gods, sages, guhyas (a class of demigods), siddhas, and the immortal vidyādharas. The serpent-demons propitiated the hymn, and obtained the complete attainment as desired by them. The donor, who will mutter my hymn, will be meritorious and blessed here (i.e. in this world). No doubt should be raised in this matter. O best king, come to my abode with your wife.

42b-45. Hari supported the king with his hand. There (at that time) drums (were) sounded; gandharvas sang lovely songs. Best celestial nymphs danced. All gods and sages showered flowers. They praised him with hymns. Then the king, along with his wife, went to Viṣṇu. That Vijvala, with his mind delighted, saw him being praised by hosts of gods and siddhas. He, of a great prowess, came there where his father and mother were.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Vena Asks to Hear More about Kuñjala

Viṣṇu said:

1-8a. (Vijvala's) father (Kuñjala) lived on a bunyan tree on the beautiful bank of Narmadā. Vijvala too came there, and the very intelligent, religious-minded one narrated to his father the greatness of the hymn called Vāsudeva(-hymn). With a very much pleased mind he told him as to how Viṣṇu came there and gave him (i.e., Subāhu) an auspicious boon. Kuñjala also, having heard the account of that king, was full of great joy, and having embraced his son said: "O child, by narrating the very auspicious (hymn) of Vāsudeva (to the king) you have done a meritorious deed and an obligation to the noble king." Having thus spoken to his god-like son, having congratulated him with blessings, and having repeatedly praised him, he remained on the beautiful bank of the river, while Cyavana was beholding. O great king, I have told you all this account of those devotees of Viṣṇu. What else should I tell you ?

Vena said:

8b-12a. You have given me, through the vessel of a conch, nectar to drink. Therefore, which mortal on the earth will not have a strong desire to drink it? The knowledge about Viṣṇu is always the best drink here (i.e. on the earth). I am not satisfied when it is thus being narrated by you. O lord of gods, my strong desire to hear it increases. Through grace (i.e. be graceful and) tell me about the activities of Kuñjala. What did the noble one say to his fourth son? Please tell that to me in great detail.

The lord said:

12b-14. Listen, I shall tell you Kuñjala's account, so also Cyavana's account full of great religious merit. O best of men, this meritorious account destroys sins. The man who devoutly listens to it, would get the fruit of (having performed) a thousand sacrifices.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

Kapiñjala's Narration

Sūta said:

1-2. Viṣṇu, the god of gods, told the best king, the son of Aṅga, the very meritorious account that destroys sins. Listen, I shall narrate to you the meritorious account, and also the account of the noble Kuñjala.

Viṣṇu said:

3-4a. And the pious Kuñjala with joy called his fourth son Kapiñjala, and said to him: "O son, tell me what wonder you saw. O best son, to which (forest) did you go for your food from here? Tell me, O blessed one, what very meritorious (event) you have seen.

Kapiñjala said:

4b-24. O father, I shall narrate to you the wonder about which you have asked, which no one has seen or heard (before) and which I have not heard from any one. I shall tell it just now. O father, listen to it now. May all (my) brothers listen to it. O mother, you (too) listen to it now. The mountain Kailāsa is the best one. It is white like the moon. It is full of many minerals, and is adorned with various trees. O father, it is washed all round with the auspicious, pleasing water of the Ganges. O father, from which (i.e. from that mountain) thousands of divine rivers of various kinds have arisen. So also various kinds (of streams of) water (have arisen from it). On the great mountain there are thousands of lakes containing water. On the best mountain there are large rivers which are resorted to by swans and cranes, which give religious merit and which destroy sins. There are various thickets of trees full of flowers and fruits, and also full of various trees, green and auspicious. (The mountain) is full of the groups of kinnaras, and is crowded with the celestial nymphs. It is well-adorned with gandharvas, siddhas, bards and hosts of gods. It is possessed of the thickets of divine trees; is full of divine objects; it is very rich with the loveliness of divine fragrances. It is very

beautiful on account of the white slabs of crystal. O king, it is full of the sun's rays and possesses brilliance. Everywhere it is adorned with trees full of flowers like sandal trees of agreeable fragrance, bukula trees with blue flowers. It is pleasant due to the good (i.e. sweet) notes of divine birds. It is pleasant due to the humming of bees and multitudes of trees. That mountain, along with the forest, looks splendid by the notes of cuckoos. There is a Śiva-temple, crowded with crores of Śiva's attendants; with rays (the mountain) was white and was auspicious; it was having auspicious slabs of a heap of virtue. It was on all sides resounding with roaring lions, with buffaloes and elephants; so also with the loud trumpets of the quarter-elephants. It was crowded with various (kinds of) deer and with monkeys. In the caves it was resounding (i.e. its caves were resounding) with the loud notes of peacocks. It was adorned with caves, plasterings and ridges and summits. It was full of many streams. It shone with herbs. It was divine, of a divine merit, and full of auspicious sites. The great mountain, the heap of merit was resorted to by pulindas, bhillas and kolas. The lord of mountains shone with frightful peaks and with huts; pure, auspicious and meritorious pleasures and a great sound of the streams of the water of the Ganges spread about.

25-26a. There (i.e. on the mountain) is the abode of Śaṅkara. To (that) Kailāsa I had gone. There I saw a wonder which was never seen or heard of (before). O father, listen to all that will be said by me.

26b-30. From the auspicious, highly rising peak of the lord of mountains (like that of Meru), a snowy, milky and golden stream flows (down) on the ground; and O glorious one, this stream of the Ganges adorned with (i.e. flowing with) a thundering sound has speedily reached the peak of Kailāsa and has expanded there. There is a great pool of water (in the stream) of the Ganges of the measure of ten yojanas. It shines with much auspicious and pure water. It has received auspiciousness from all sides and greatly shines with large swans. (It is auspicious because of) auspicious, divine, sweet utterance of the sāmans. The swans coo there, and by that (cooing) the lake looks splendid.

31-46. O you very intelligent one, on its bank on a slab of stone was seated Himālaya's daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) with her hair

let loose, and endowed with the wealth of beauty. She, well-endowed with a divine form, virtuous, of divine characteristics, and adorned with divine ornaments shone on its bank. I do not know whether she was the daughter of the lord of mountains (i.e. Pārvatī) or the daughter of the great ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī) or was Brahmā's wife (viz. Sarasvatī) or was Svāhā (the wife of Agni) or she was the illustrious Indrāṇī (i.e. the wife of Indra) or Rohiṇī (the spouse of the Moon). O father, by all means such wealth of beauty is not observed (in the case) of other very divine young females. Such marks of beauty, qualities and eharacter (that) were noticed in her, so also her body deluding the universe which I saw were not to be seen (even) in the celestial nymphs. That young girl, seated on a slab and full of grief, and (being) without many kinsmen, wept very melodiously. She shed many pearllike tears. The pure tears fell into the lake, O very intelligent ones. The drops (i.e. the tears), resembling pearls, fell into that great (mass of) water. From them arose lotuses which were charming and fragrant. O highly intelligent one, from the tears (that fell) from her eyes, lotuses were produced. Those innumerable (lotuses) floated in the water of the Ganges. The very pleasant ones speedily fell into the stream of the Ganges, well-resorted to by multitudes of swans. The stream of the Ganges has flowed out from that place. Reaching the top of Kailāsa, called Ratna and having pleasant caves, it is full of water and has extended over a couple of yojanas. It was crowded with groups of swans and full of aquatic birds. There are lotuses of many special colours in the pure stream resorted to by groups of sages. The lotuses which were produced from the tears in the morning were large and fragrant and floated in the pure stream of the Ganges full of water, which time and again resounded with the (notes of) beautiful swans and aquatic birds.

Sūta said:

47-53. O father, the great lord (Śiva called Ratneśvara), very venerable to gods and demons, always remains on that mountain called Ratna. O father, there I saw a sage full of religious merit, covered with a mass of matted hair, without any clothes and holding a staff. He was without any support, (lived) without food, was very weak due to penance, emaciated, (just) a bundle

of bones, and covered with skin only. The limbs of the noble one were powdered with ashes only. He, of a great penance, with an improper support and seated in devotion to Śiva would eat dry and withered leaves fallen (there). Bringing those fragrant lotuses from the water of the Ganges, he, the noble one, skilled in singing and dancing, would worship the god of gods, Ratneśvara (with them). The religious-minded one, coming to the temple and remaining at the door of the enemy of Tripura, sang and danced, and also wept melodiously.

54-57. O father, O best of speakers, this is the wonder that I saw. Through favour (i.e. being favourable to me) tell me the reason if you know it. O noble one, who is that girl? Why would (i.e. does) that man worship the great god (i.e. Śiva)? Tell me all that in detail, which is the cause of (my) doubt." The very intelligent Kuñjala, who was thus addressed by his son Kapiñjala, spoke to him, while the sage was listening.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

Aśokasundarī Is Born

Kuñjala said:

1-3. O child, now I shall explain to you all that you said: as to what their splendour originated from, O you best twice-born. Once the great goddess Pārvatī, the best among women, while sporting, said (these) words to the lord: "O great god, in my mind a great longing has sprung up. To me (please) show a grove that is best among groves."

Śrī Mahādeva said:

4. Let it be so, O great goddess. I shall show you the Nandana, crowded with gods and resorted to by brāhmaṇas and siddhas.

5-11a. Having thus spoken to that goddess, he, Mahādeva, was eager to go to Nandanavana itself with her and the atten-

dants. He, surrounded by crores of attendants, mounted his bull (i.e. Nandī) who was beautiful in all limbs, whose back was divine, who was endowed with ornaments, who was furnished with bells and garlands, who wore multitudes of small bells, who was well-decorated with chowries, silken threads and pearl-necklaces, who resembled a swan and the moon and who had pleasing characteristics. Nandī, Bhṛṅgī, Mahākāla, Skanda, Caṇḍa, Manohara, Vīrabhadra, Gaṇeśa, Puṣpadanta, Maṇīśvara, Atibala, Subala, Meghanāda, Ghaṭāvaha, Ghaṇṭākarṇa, Kālinda, Pulinda, Vīrabāhuka, Keśarīkiṅkara, Caṇḍahāsa, Prajāpatī—these and others like Sanaka, whose power was penance, (accompanied him).

11b-12. That Śiva was (thus) surrounded by attendants numbering crores. Mahādeva, accompanied by the attendants and the goddess entered Nandanavana only which was resorted to by gods and kinnaras.

13-36a. The lord of gods showed Pārvatī that beautiful Nandanavana which was rich with various trees, full of many flowers, which was charming, which was crowded with plantain-trees, and with campaka trees with flowers, with jasmine-creepers having abundant flowers, and full of a number of mālatī creepers, which always shone with branches full of flowers, and with excellent groves of pāṭala-trees, and with great sandal trees of pleasant fragrance. It was full of groves of devadāru trees, and crowded with tall trees, with sarala trees, coconut trees, also with betel-nut trees, with divine date-trees, bread-fruit trees, bent down with the loads of fruits, with trees exuding fragrance—thus it was full of big trees. It was well-adorned with saptaparṇa trees, resembling the lustre of fire. It was full of great rose-apple trees, nimba trees, and citron trees, with orange trees, sindhuvāra trees, priyāla trees, śāla trees and tinduka trees, udumbara trees, wood-apple trees, and was adorned with rose-apple trees. It was full of trees like mango, the king of fruits, Indian fig-trees resembling clouds, divine groves of dark-blue, also with groves of trees with unblown flowers. It was resorted to by (i.e. it contained) large tamāla trees resembling the sun. It was beautified by other trees all resembling dark-blue groves; it was adorned with very auspicious desire-yielding trees full of all desired fruits and giving auspicious fruits. It was full of sweet notes and cries of various

birds. It resounded with the auspicious cooings of cuckoos and with bees. It resounded with the notes of birds longing for honey. It was crowded with trees of many kinds and was full of many herds of deer. O son, that (piece of) land shines with various fragrant flowers fallen from trees it is; as it were worshipped with fragrant flowers. O son, there are very auspicious wells, pure with the fragrance of lotuses. They are full of water and are resorted to by swans and ducks. The great Nandana shines everywhere with lakes resembling seas and endowed with the fragrance of water, and with hosts of celestial nymphs. The lordly Nandana grove shines everywhere with halls, white pitchers, beautiful golden staffs, whitewashed palaces and with large hosts of kinnaras. That auspicious appearing Nandana shone everywhere with gandharvas, beautiful celestial nymphs, amusements of deities and with groups of sages and good meditating saints. Magnanimous Bhava (i.e. Śiva) of a great prowess along with that great goddess (Pārvatī) saw that glorious, auspicious Nandana, the abode of the meritorious, the mine of happiness and endowed with the quality of tranquility. In the Nandana grove also the beautiful desire-yielding tree endowed with desired flowers and fruits shone along with rays like masses of lustre of the sun. Seeing such lordly tree the goddess said to Śiva: "O lord, tell (me) the auspicious name of this all-meritorious tree". That Śiva, the great sun among all the luminaries around, said to the goddess:

Śiva said:

36b-39. The great position of this is known as auspicious; and Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the chief among gods. The divine river (i.e. the Ganges) is the chief among rivers. As the beautiful moon is the chief among those that are pleasant, as the earth is the chief among the elements, as the lord of elephants (i.e. Airāvata) is chief among elephants, as the ocean is the chief among reservoirs, as, O respectable lady, corn is the chief among herbs, as the Himālaya is the chief among the mountains, as metaphysical knowledge is the chief among lores, as the lord of men (i.e. a king) is the chief among all people, in the same way this lord of trees a welcome guest of all, is dear to the lord of gods.

Śrī Pārvatī said:

40-42. O Śambhu, tell me the auspicious and pure quality of this lord of trees.

Hearing the words of the goddess he told her everything about that good tree. (He said:) "This best tree called 'Kalpadruma' gives to the very meritorious gods, those that resemble gods, and best gods, whatever they resolve. All auspicious objects are produced from this (tree). The very important gods, superior due to their penance, having obtained here only the very divine (object) full of gems, superior to life (even) which is difficult to get, enjoy it."

43-49. The goddess heard the wonderful words of Śiva. With his consent she mentally conceived a very virtuous and beautiful gem of a body. The Daughter of the Mountain obtained from that great tree a woman who was (so) lovely in all limbs, virtuous and beautiful that she, helping Cupid, had come to delude the universe. She was the treasure of sport; she was of the form of the accomplishment of happiness; she was endowed with everything; she was having large and lotus-like eyes; her face was lotus-like; her hands resembled lotuses; she was beautiful Lakṣmī; she was like a good figure of gold; like that her hair was clean and very bright in splendour, pleasantly bright, very curly and long, was very delicately tied and was covered with fragrant flowers. That young lady, with her hair tied, looked splendid with the firm knots of hair and excellent form. As on the boundary-line of the trees the line of the muktā-flowers shines, similarly on the parting line of her hair, a chaplet of pearls shone. At the root of the parting of hair of the very respectable lady there was a mark, like the bright preceptor of the demons (i.e. Venus) that had risen. On the brows were two lotuses. The lotus-like navel like that of a deer shone with its mass of lustre. The brilliance of the mark at the root of parting of hair displayed the wealth of her beauty in the good world; so also the pearls on her hair and forehead always spread out beauty.

50-52a. As the beautiful moon shines with lustre, so she of charming movements, shone. As the full moon, the mass of cool rays, shines with the canopy of the moonlight, in the same way

her face causing charm and celebrated in the universe, shone. Even the moon is having the spot, and losing the digits everyday, wanes; but her face, always joyful and spotless, is always full.

52b-54a. The lotus, having looked with disapproval at its own fragrance (and thinking)—'This lady with a lotus-like face and endowed with all virtues is fashioned with my properties'—did not then feel happy on seeing its own exuding fragrance. The wind (moving in) the world blew from her mouth. Being suddenly ashamed, it always remained in water after resorting to it.

54b-55. Some very intelligent people with their judgement restrained by their mind (i.e. after proper thought) said: 'O good Cupid, as the treasure of a king is full of the bits (i.e. gems) of the sea, in the same way, her mouth, looking charming with the bimba-like lower lip and with the charming smile, is looking charming with gem-like excellent teeth.'

56-64a. She had good eyebrows, her nose fine, her ears were adorned with jewels. Her cheeks having golden complexion, were possessed of brightness. The three lines existing on the neck shone very much. Here (i.e. on the neck) there were three lines with (i.e. respresenting) her good fortune, good character and love. Her breasts were hard, plump and resembled a round figure. They were pitchers of Cupid intended for sprinkling (water from). Her even shoulders looked very beautiful, and were in company of the heart. Her arms were good; they were round, soft, of a good complexion and possessed good marks. Her lotus-like hands were very even, had the colour of lotuses and were very cool. They were endowed with divine characteristics and possessed the marks of a lotus and swastika on them. Her fingers were straight, held lotuses and had nails. The nails were very sharp and were like drops of water. The complexion of her body resembled the interior of a lotus. Her (body) odour was like that of a lotus. The beautiful young lady looked splendid like Lakṣmī. The daughter of the tree was endowed with all good characteristics and was very beautiful. Her feet resembled red lotuses, were very soft, and very beautiful. The nails growing from the toes had the shape of the flashes (shooting) from gems.

64b-66. (Everything) as is laid down in the scientific works

(about beauty) was seen in her limbs. Her body looked beautiful due to all ornaments. She had put on a necklace, bracelets and anklets. She shone with the belt and girdle and with the sound of the (tinkling bells) of the girdle. The auspicious one attained great beauty by means of blue silken garment. She, endowed with qualities, (looked very beautiful) due to a divine and a very red bodice.

67. From the idea conceived by her, Pārvatī obtained an excellence—a great production. She obtained joy from the desire-yielding tree. She said (these) words to Śaṅkara:

68. "O god, I saw the tree as you had described it. As an object is conceived, so it is seen."

Sūta said:

69. Then that lady beautiful in all limbs came near their side (i.e. approached them) and with devotion saluted their lotus-like feet.

70. Then she spoke affectionate, pleasant and attractive words: "O lord, O mother, tell me the reason for which I was produced."

Śrī Devī (*i.e. Pārvatī*) *said*:

71-74. Through curiosity about the truth about the tree I conceived you. O good lady, the fruit, i.e. you, the wealth of beauty is instantly obtained. You are undoubtedly my daughter endowed with all good fortune. You will be known in the world as Aśokasundarī. Nahuṣa, lord of kings, well known in the lunar family, like god Indra, will be your husband.

The mountain's Daughter (viz. Pārvatī), thus gave her a boon and went with great joy, accompanied by Śaṅkara, to the Kailāsa mountain.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

Aśokasundarī Is Saved and Āyu Gets Boon

Kuñjala said:

1-2. At that time Aśokasundarī was born as the best woman. She, of a charming smile, skilled in singing and dancing and enjoying all pleasures along with the very beautiful daughters of gods sported in the excellent, meritorious Nandana endowed with all desired objects.

3-4. Vipracitti's son Huṇḍa, who was always violent, impetuous and very lustful entered Nandana. After seeing Aśokasundarī, endowed with all ornaments, he was, at her sight, piereed by the arrows of Cupid.

5. He, of a huge body said to her: "O auspicious one, who are you? To whom do you belong? For what reason have you come to this excellent Nandana (garden)?"

Aśokasundarī said:

6. Now listen. I am the daughter of the very meritorious Śiva. I am the sister of Kārtikeya and the Mountain's Daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) is my mother.

7. Due to childhood (i.e. being a child) I have playfully reached the Nandana grove. Who are you? Why are you asking me like this ?

Huṇḍa said:

8-11. I am Vipracitti's son, endowed with good qualities and characteristics. I am well-known as Huṇḍa, haughty due to might and power. O you of a beautiful face, even among the demons I am the best, and there is no other demon like me among gods, in human worlds or in other worlds (like that) of serpents in respect of penance, glory in the family, or wealth and pleasures. O you of large eyes, on seeing you I have been struck by the arrows of Cupid. I have sought your refuge. Be pleased to favour me. Be my dear wife, dear to me like my own life.

Aśokasundarī said:

12-20. Listen, I shall tell you the cause of all contacts

between well-born men and women; so listen, O Huṇḍa, it is the way of the world in this mundane existence that the husband of a woman would be suitable to her in respect of virtues. There is a reason why I shall not be your worthy wife. O lord of the demon-kings, listen with a subdued mind. When I was born from the lord of trees, I was thought of by Pārvatī, after properly grasping Śiva's mind. With the god's consent, the goddess also produced my husband. He will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. He will be very intelligent and religious-minded. He will be a conqueror, and will resemble Jiṣṇu of (i.e. Viṣṇu or Arjuna) in valour, and will be like fire in brilliance. He will be omniscient, veracious, and will resemble Kubera in (point of) charity. He will be a sacrificer, a lord of charity (i.e. a great donor), and will be like Cupid in handsomeness. He will be named Nahuṣa, will be righteous and a great treasure of virtues and good character. He is given to me by the goddess (Pārvatī) and the god (Śiva). My husband will be famous. From him I shall obtain a handsome son, endowed with all good qualities. Due to the grace of Śiva, I shall obtain from him a son (named) Yayāti, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, and dear to people in the world, and brave in battle.

21. O brave Huṇḍa, I am a loyal wife, and am especially the wife of someone else. Therefore, completely give up the wrong notion and go (away) from here.

22a. He just laughed and said (these) word to Aśokasundarī.

Huṇḍa said:

22b-30a. What you said (that) the goddess and the god (have given Nahuṣa as your husband) is not proper. That righteous one, named Nahuṣa will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. You are senior in age, so he who is younger is not fit (to be your husband). A younger woman is commended (to be the wife), and not a younger man (to be the husband). O good lady, when will that man be your husband? Freshness and youth will certainly perish. O you of an excellent complexion, beautiful women always become dear to men on the strength of their youth. O you of a beautiful face, youth is the great capital of women. Supported by it they enjoy pleasure and objects as desired by

them. O good lady, when will that son of Āyu come to you? Listen to me. Youth exists just (for) today. It will be useless (later). Listen, he will have to pass through conditions like living in the womb, childhood and adolescence. When will he be endowed with the splendour of youth and be fit for you? O you of large eyes, with the splendour of youth, drink an intoxicating drink. Enjoy happily with me.

30b-38. Hearing the words of Huṇḍa, Śiva's daughter, full of fright, again spoke to that lord of demons: "When the twentieth yuga called Dvāpara will come, the righteous Bala (i.e. Balarāma), the incrarnation of Śeṣa and son of Vasudeva, will take the divine daughter of Revata as his wife. O illustrious one, she is already born in the best yuga called Kṛta. She is older than he by the measure of three yugas. That Revatī has become dear to Bala (rāma) like his own life. When the future Dvāpara (yuga) will come, she will be born here. Formerly she was born as Māyāvatī, an excellent daughter of a gandharva. The best demon Śambara kidnapped and confined her. In that yuga, the best hero Pradyumna, the son of Mādhava, the lord of Yādavas, is declared to be her husband. He will be her husband. This future (event) is seen by ancient illustrious and noble (sages) like Vyāsa. Such are the words uttered about me by the goddess, the mother of the world, and the daughter of Himālaya, at that time, O demon.

39-42. And you, covetous through greed and passion are talking (words) which are wicked, full of sin, and without (i.e. not supported by) the Vedas and religious treatises. Whatever, good or bad is firmly ordained in the case of a person according to his former deeds, takes place in his case. If the words (that are) in the mouth of gods and brāhmaṇas come out and are true, they shall never be otherwise. This is ordained due to my destiny, and that of that Nahuṣa. Having thought of the union (of us two) like this only the goddess and Śiva also said (like that).

43-44. Realising this, be calm and give up the wrong notion haunting your mind. O demon, you shall certainly not be able to lead away my mind. I am a loyal wife, firm in mind; who can lead me away? I shall burn you with a great curse. O great demon, go from here."

45-48. Hearing these words of her, the mighty demon Huṇḍa thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'How would this one be my wife?' Thinking like this, the deceitful Huṇḍa vanished. Then leaving her and speedily going out from that place, the next day he came there fashioning illusion full of sin. O my son, the demon having taken up a divine, illusive form of a woman, became of the form of (i.e. turned himself into) a lady through illusion. That very beautiful young lady took up an illusory form. Engaged in laughing and sports she went to that place, where Śiva's daughter (i.e. Aśokasundarī) stayed.

49-50. As if affectionate (towards her) she said (these) words to Aśokasundarī: "O you blessed one, who are you? To whom do you belong? O young lady, why do you stay in the penance-grove and practise the penance drying up your passion? Tell me, O very fortunate one, for what reason (you are practising the penance) very difficult to practice."

51-53. Hearing those auspicious words uttered by the demon of an illusory form who had concealed his original form and who had a longing (for her), that lady, who was very much afflicted, quickly told him the account of her creation as it had formerly taken place, and also all the reason for (taking up) the penance. (She) also (told him about) the harassment done by that wicked demon. She did not recognize his illusory form, and (so) through affection she told him (everything).

Huṇḍa said:

54-57a. O respectable lady, you are a loyal wife, you are engaged in good vows. Your character and behaviour are good, your actions are pious, and you are a very chaste lady. O good lady, I am a loyal wife, and am devoted to my husband. I, a great chaste woman, am practising penance for my husband. That wicked Huṇḍa also killed my husband. For his destruction I am practising great (i.e. severe) penance. Come to my holy hermitage. I stay on the bank of the Ganges.

57b-62. That daughter of Śiva was addressed by her (i.e, Huṇḍa) with other charming and convincing words, and Huṇḍa, through friendly feeling, deluded her. Deluded through folly she was very speedily attracted by him. He brought her to his divine,

matchless and very beautiful house. O son, on the peak of Meru there is an excellent city, known as Vaidūrya, full of all good qualities, very auspicious and named Kāñcana. The entire city of the demon was thronged with tall palaces, with pitchers, staffs and chowries. It was full of dark-blue groves resembling clouds, and full of various trees, also with wells, pools and lakes and with rivers and reservoirs. It shone with great jewels and with ramparts furnished with gold, and rich in objects satisfying all desires.

63. That Aśokasundarī then saw that beautiful city. "O friend, rell me to which deity this place belongs."

64-65a. He said: "It belongs to that lord of demons whom you have seen before. It is the place of that demon. O illustrious one, I am that best demon. O you of an excellent complexion, through illusion (i.e. by deceiving you) I have brought you (here).

65b-67. (Thus) speaking to her he took her to his golden palace, full of many mansions, and resembling the peak of Kailāsa. He, oppressed by passion, seated that beautiful lady on a swing, took up his original form, and then the lord of the demons, afflicted by the arrows of Cupid, joined the palms of his hands, and said (these) words to her:

68-70. "O good lady, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire. Resort to me who, being oppressed by passion, am attached to you, O you of large eyes.

The respectable lady (*i.e. Aśokasundarī*) *said*:

O lord of demons, you cannot at all lead me astray. Do not even entertain in your mind the delusion about me that has come (to you). I am difficult to be secured by mean demons who are great sinners. There is no doubt about this. Do not talk (like this) again and again.

71-72a. That goddess, born after (i.e. younger sister of) Skanda, endowed with penance, burning with great rage, desiring to destroy that demon, and throbbing like the tongue of Death again spoke to that mean demon:

72b-79a. "O sinner, you have done a fierce deed for (i.e. leading to) the destruction of yourself, for (i.e. bringing about) the

destruction of your family and these your kinsmen. You have brought a burning, bright flame of fire to your house. As an inauspicious, deceitful bird, risen with all (kinds of) misery, brings about the destruction of the house of one whose house it enters, as that bird would desire the destruction of (the man's) kinsmen, all wealth and family also and (then) enter (the man's) house, in the same way, I, desiring your destruction, have come to your house. Undoubtedly I shall now destroy everything belonging to you—your wealth, grain, family, life, sons and grandsons etc. O demon, since you brought me who was practising a great (i.e. severe) penance, and who, longing for a husband, was desiring (to marry) Āyu's son, Nahuṣa, my husband will destroy you.

79b-88. Formerly (only) the god had (fore) seen this remedy in my case. This popular verse, (which) the wise sing, is true. It is actually observed in the world; the wicked-minded do not realize it. There is no dout that one who is to experience pain, pleasure etc. from one does experience it from that very person. You will go to (man). With one's finger-tip one touches a very sharp, fine-edged, good sword. Now know (that touching) me like that would cause anger (in me). Who, being rash and going to a lion who is angry and roaring loudly, would clip the hair from his face? He, who longs for death, desires to enjoy me, who am of a truthful conduct, restrained and remaining in (i.e. practising) penance. He, now, since he is prompted by Death, desires to seize the gem of a black, living cobra; and you, deluded by Death, are sent by Death, O fool. Therefore such wicked thought is produced (in your mind). Do you not realise it? Except the son of Āyu, who looks (i.e. would look at me)? Any other (man than Āyu's son) will die by looking at my form."

89-92. She, who was a chaste lady, who was grieved, who was disturbed with distress, who was controlled, and was observing a religious vow, spoke like this and went to the bank of the Ganges. "Formerly, I, who had practised a severe penance with a desire for (obtaining) a groom, will again, desiring your destruction, practise a hard penance. I shall then go to my husband, when I shall see you, killed by the magnanimous

Nahuṣa with sharp arrows like thunderbolt and resembling serpents, (and see you) the sinner, fallen on the battlefield, with your hair loose, and with blood (oozing from your body)."

93-94. Having made such a great vow for the destruction of Huṇḍa, that firm daughter of Śiva resorted to the excellent bank of the Ganges. As bright, burning flame of fire, full of brilliance would burn the great worlds, the daughter of the lord of gods, burning with rage, practised, on the bank of Ganges, a penance difficult to practise.

Kuñjala said;

95-96. O noble one, having thus spoken, Śiva's daughter, having bathed in the water of the Ganges, went to her own city, called Kāñcana. That young Aśokasundarī, of a slim body, and endowed with truthfulness, practised penance to bring about the death of Huṇḍa.

97-98. Huṇḍa also, with his heart burnt by the curse became afflicted, and, being very much tormented by the fire of words, thought. Having called his minister named Kampana, he said to him. He told him the important news of her curse:

99-100. "I have been cursed by Aśokasundarī, the good daughter of Śiva: 'You will die at the hands of my husband, Nahuṣa.' That child is not (as yet) born; but Āyu's wife is carrying. Act in such a way that the curse would be false."

Kampana said:

101-104. Having kidnapped the wife of Āyu bring her (here). In this way your enemy will not be born. Or, with strong (medicines) cause her abortion. In this way also your enemy will not be born. Mark the time of the birth of that wicked Nahuṣa. Having carried him away, bring him (here) and kill him of a sinful mind.

Having thus held consultation with that Kampana, the demon (Huṇḍa) exerted himself to destroy Nahuṣa.

Viṣṇu said:

105-108. The glorious, righteous son of Aila, named Āyu,

the ornament of the Soma family, the best king and the sovereign emperor knowing all practices, engaged in the vow of truthfulness, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, ruled under one umbrella (i.e. ruled as the universal sovereign) by means of penance, glory, might, charity, sacrifices, meritorious acts and restraint on the earth. The king (Āyu) did not have a son. So he was unhappy. The righteous one thought: 'How can a son be born to me (i.e. How can I have a son)?'

109. Āyu, the lord of the earth, entertained such a thought. Being composed, he made a great effort for getting a son.

110-113. Atri's son Dattātreya, the high-souled brāhmaṇa, the great sage, with his eyes red due to (having drunk) spirituous liquor, was sporting with a woman. The virtuous one, intoxicated by wine, having seated a young, auspicious woman, best of all women, on his lap, sang, danced and heavily drank liquor. The best among the great meditating saints, the best sage, (who was) without a sacred thread, (and) with his body smeared with sandal and aloe wood paste, shone with divine garlands of flowers and appendages of pearl-necklaces.

114-118. The king, having gone to his hermitage, and seeing the best brāhmaṇa and being well-composed saluted him with his head (bent down), and falling prostrate before him. That pious son of Atri having seen that best king who had come before him with devotion, resorted to meditation. O best one, the king passed a hundred years like this. Having called him who was steady and calm and greatly devoted, he said these (words): "O king, why do you torment yourself? I am void of brāhmaṇic practices. I never had brāhmaṇahood. I am greedy of wine and flesh, and always attached to women. I do not have power to give a boon. (Please) serve (some) other brāhmaṇa."

Āyu said:

119-123. O glorious one, there is no other best brāhmaṇa like you, who grants all desired objects and are the greatest lord in the three worlds. O you illustrious one, you are Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered one, the highest lord, (born) in the family of Atri in the form of a brāhmaṇa. O chief of the lords of gods, O highest lord, I salute you. O you who are affectionate to those

who submit themselves to you, I have sought your refuge. O Hṛṣīkeśa, emancipate me. You stay (i.e. take pleasure in) causing illusion. I know you to be one who knows the beings living in the universe, who is the chief of the universe, who is the lord of the world and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. O Govinda, O you of a universal form, protect me only. My salutation to you.

Kuñjala said:

124-128. When a long time of many days passed, Dattātreya, in an intoxicated condition, said to the best king: "Do as I tell you. Give me wine in a cup; and the meal of flesh that is got cooked." Hearing those words of him, that Āyu, the lord of the earth, being eager, speedily got wine in a cup, and quickly cut off well-cooked flesh with his hand, and, O best one, the best king gave these to Dattātreya. That best sage became happy in mind. Seeing (Āyu's) devotion, prowess and great service to the preceptor, he spoke to that humble Āyu, the lord of kings:

129. "Well-being to you, O king, ask for a boon that is difficult to be obtained on the earth. I shall now give you everything that you desire."

The king said:

130-135. O best sage, through pity for me you are truly granting (me) a boon. Give me a son endowed with virtues, omniscient, possessed of good qualities, having the might of gods, and unconquerable by gods and demons, kṣatriyas, giants, fierce demons and kinnaras. (He should be) devoted to gods and brāhmaṇas, and (he should) especially look after his subjects. (He should be) sacrificer, lord of charity (i.e. the best donor), brave, affectionate to those who seek his refuge, a donor, an enjoyer, magnanimous and learned in Vedas and sacred treatises, skilled in Dhanurveda (i.e. archery), and well-versed in sacred precepts. His intellect (should be) unbeaten; he (should be) brave and undefeated in battles. He should possess such qualities, be handsome and one from whom the race would come forth. O illustrious one, give me (such) a son sustaining my family, if you, through grace, want to give me another boon, O lord.

Dattātreya said:

136-138. Let it be so, O glorious one. You will have a son, in your mansion, who will be meritorious, will perpetuate your race and show compassion to all living beings. He will be endowed with these virtues, and with a portion of Viṣṇu. He, the lord of men, will be a sovereign emperor, comparable to Indra.

Having thus given him a boon, the great meditating saint gave the king an excellent fruit and said to him: "Give this to your wife." Saying so, and dismissing that Āyu, who had bent before him, after having congratulated him with blessings, he disappeared."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Indumatī's Dream

Kuñjala said:

1-4. When that illustrious great sage Dattātreya had left, that great king Āyu came (back) to his own city. Being delighted, he entered Indumatī's house endowed with glory, rich with all desired objects and resembling Indra's house. O best brāhmaṇa, like Indra in heaven, the intelligent one ruled with Indumatī, the daughter of Svarbhānu, over his kingdom. By the words of Dattātreya, that queen Indumatī conceived a child endowed with divine lustre as a result of eating the fruit.

5-14. O illustrious one, Indumatī saw, at night accompanied by day (i.e. in the early morning), an excellent dream giving many auspicious objects. (She saw in the dream) a man, who was a brāhmaṇa, resembling the sun, endowed with necklace of pearls, and adorned with a white garment, entering her house. A garland fashioned with white flowers shone round his neck. His body looked charming with all ornaments, and was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste). He had four hands, he had a conch in his hand, and held a mace, a disc and a sword. He, of a great lustre, adorned with divine ornaments, shone with an umbrella,

resembling the orb of the moon, which was held (over him). He appeared handsome with a necklace, bracelets, armlets and anklets. He (also) shone with ear-rings resembling the orb of the moon. A very wise man like this came (there). Having called Indumatī, he repeatedly bathed the beautiful lady with milk, with (i.e. from) a conch full of milk and having the colour like that of the moon and decked with gems and gold. He threw (i.e. put) into her mouth a white, beautiful snake, covered with a thousand hoods, endowed with a gem and full of bright flames. On her neck he also put a pearl. That very glorious lord of gods then gave a lotus into Indumatī's hand and went to his own place.

15. Like this she saw a great dream and the best son. The illustrious one narrated it to Āyu, the lord of kings.

16-17a. Having heard it, the great king thought again. Then having called his preceptor Śaunaka, the very glorious, omniscient and best among the learned, narrated the best dream to him.

The king said :

17b-18a. O illustrious one, O best brāhmaṇa, today, (late) in the night, my wife saw (in a dream) a brāhmaṇa entering the house. What is the meaning of this dream ?

Śaunaka said :

18b-23. Formerly intelligent Dattātreya gave you a boon; and directed (you to give) a very effective fruit to the queen for (obtaining) a son. What have you done with the fruit, O king ? To whom have you given it ?

Having heard the words uttered by the king, viz. "I have given it to my good wife," the very intelligent, best brāhmaṇa Śaunaka said: "There is no doubt that, due to Dattātreya's grace, the best son, possessed of a portion of Viṣṇu will be born in your house. O king, I have told you this meaning of the dream. A son of a divine power, and resembling Indra and Viṣṇu will be born (in your house). Your son will be the soul of all good practices and will perpetuate the lunar dynasty. He will be proficient in the science of archery and the (Ṛg-) Veda (etc.)".

24. Having spoken thus to the king, Śaunaka went home. The king, with his wife, was full of great joy.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

Nahuṣa is Born

Kuñjala said :

1-3a. With her friends she went to Nandana garden to sport (there). There she heard significant words, not wholesome to her father, of the bards and siddhas talking delightfully, viz. 'In the house of Āyu, the best son, of great might, resembling Viṣṇu in valour will be born; he will kill Huṇḍa'.

3b-4. Having heard such significant, unwholesome, painful words, she went (to her father) and told the painful words to her father in brief.

5-14. She narrated them to her father. The father, hearing them, was amazed. He remembered the curse of Aśokasundarī, given by her formerly. For this that Aśokasundarī practised penance. That demon who is wicked, who is dragged by Death, who is sinful, looking out for a flaw, always exerted to destroy the embryo of Indumatī. O noble one, when he saw the queen endowed with beauty and generosity, possessed of divine lustre, protected by Viṣṇu's lustre, having divine brilliance and resembling the sun's orb, he always remained by her side to watch her. From a distance the wicked demon showed her many spells and very fearful terrors and scares. She, endowed with the lustre of the child in the womb, was (thus) protected by Viṣṇu's lustre. Never again fear arose in her mind. The demon became ineffectual, and his exertion was useless. The desired object of the wicked Huṇḍa never came about. A hundred years thus passed while he was watching. That daughter of Svarbhānu gave birth to a son. At night only a son was born to her, O best son. Like the sun in the sky he very much shone with brilliance.

Sūta said :

15-18a. There was a very wicked maid in the lying-in-chamber. She was of a wicked behaviour and talked very inauspicious words. Knowing everything about her the mean demon Huṇḍa entered her body and then got into the house of Āyu. When the multitude of men, very much deluded by sleep, was asleep, he kidnapped that son, resembling a child of a god, and

went out. The mean demon reached his own city called Kāñcana.

18b-20. Having called his wife Vipulā, he said (these) words to her : "Kill this very sinful child, my enemy. Then hand it over to the cook for (cooking) a meal. Get it carefully cooked in many kinds and varieties. Later I shall undoubtedly eat it from the hand of (i.e. served by) the cook."

21-22. Having heard (these) words of her husband, Vipulā was wonderstruck. 'Why does my very rough husband become so cruel ? Whose boy, endowed with all good marks, and resembling a god's child, should he, bereft of forgiveness and full of cruelty, eat, and for what reason ?'

23-24. She, full of pity, thought like this, she again asked her husband, "Why do you (want to) eat the boy ? Why do you become so much angry and shameless ? O lord of demons, tell me in truth the entire motive."

25-27. That wicked Huṇḍa told her in brief his own fault, the account, and (about) the curse of Aśokasundarī. She understood the full motive of the demon. 'This boy must be killed, otherwise my husband will die'. Thinking like this, Vipulā, overcome with anger, called her female-attendant Mekalā, and said to her :

28-33. "Mekalā, today kill this very wicked child in the kitchen; (and) hand it over to the cook, (to cook it) for the meal of Huṇḍa". Mekalā took the child, and calling the cook, said to him : "Obey the order of the king. Today cook this child." The noble cook heard like this and taking the child in his hand became ready, raising a weapon (to kill the child). This child, the son of Āyu, was protected by the lustre of Dattātreya, the god of gods. He again and again laughed. Seeing him laughing the cook was full of compassion. The female attendant also was full of pity and said to the cook : "O you very intelligent cook, do not at all kill this child. In whose good family is he, endowed with divine marks, born ?'

The cook said :

34-42a. O you good one, you have spoken the truth, full of pity. Whose is this child, endowed with royal marks ? Why will that wicked-minded, mean demon, Huṇḍa eat him ? He, who

has protected his family by means of good deeds in calamities, would live even in difficult (circumstances). This cannot be otherwise. He who is assisted by his deeds would undoubtedly live even if he is carried by the force (of the stream) of a great river or even if he has been in fire. Therefore, deeds united with piety and merit are performed. Due to that men having a long life, call it happiness. (One's) deed is one's savior and guardian. It protects and is awake. It always gives salvation and an occasion for friendship. There is no doubt that a deed always protects him only, who does a propitious deed connected with charity and merit, accompanied by agreeable words, and full of obligation. Urged by his own deed he goes to (i.e. is born in) another stock. What can a father do or what can a mother or other kinsmen and relatives do? They cannot protect him who is struck down by his deed.

Sūta said ;

42b-48a. By that deed only, by which the son of Āyu was protected, the cook, being under the influence of fate, became full of pity. Urged by his deed that female attendant also became like that. Both of them protected Āyu's son of good marks. That female servant of meritorious deeds took him from that house to Vasiṣṭha's holy hermitage that night only. Placing the excellent child (there), she then went (back) to her house. Having killed a black antelope the cook cooked (its) flesh. The lord of demons, Huṇḍa, after eating deemed the curse of Aśokasundarī to be fruitless. That lord of demons, Huṇḍa, was then full of great joy.

Kuñjala said :

48b-54. When it was the bright morning, the best religious-minded sage, Vasiṣṭha, went out of the door of his hut made of leaves, and seeing the whole, beautiful child, endowed with divine marks, like the full moon, and of charming eyes,

Vasiṣṭha said :

All you sages should come and see the child. Whose (child) is it? Who brought it to the courtyard at my door at night ?

The sages may see the child, resembling a child of a god or of a gandharva, and resembling crores of Cupids.

All those best brāhmaṇas full of great curiosity and delighted, saw that son of that noble Āyu. That pious Vasiṣṭha, seeing the son of the noble Āyu, knew through his (supernatural) knowledge, the boy to be the son of the magnanimous Āyu, and endowed with (good) conduct and also knew the account of that wicked and evil-minded Huṇḍa.

55-60a. When that best brāhmaṇa, Brahmā's son, picked up the boy with his hands through pity (for him), gods showered flowers on the boy. Gandharvas and kinnaras sang charmingly and melodiously. Sages praised that king's son with Vedic hymns. Seeing him, Vasiṣṭha granted him a boon at that time. "Your name will be famous in the world as Nahuṣa. Due to your childlike feelings, you were not destroyed by him. Therefore your name will be Nahuṣa, and you will be honoured[1] by gods." The best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vaṣiṣṭha) performed the ceremony at his birth, and taught him vows, charity and sent him away as a pupil to the teacher.

60b-64. Having fully studied as a student the Vedas with the six limbs and with the pada and krama[2] (ways of reciting them), having studied all the sacred books from Vasiṣṭha, the best brāhmaṇa, archery with its secrets, and (the use of) divine weapons and missiles, along with the manner in which they are held and released, and the excellences like various branches of knowledge, science of logic, politics that handsome and devoted son of Āyu thus became fully accomplished. Due to the grace of Vasiṣṭha, he became the holder of (i.e. skilful in using) a bow and arrows.

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1. Huṣita—The word is not clar.

2. Padakrama—*Pada* is the detachment of the Vedic words from one another and *Krama* is the particular manner of reciting Vedic text.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

Indumatī's Lamentations on the Loss of Her Child

Kuñjala said :

1-2. The glorious wife of Āyu, Svarbhānu's daughter of an excellent complexion, not seeing that excellent, matchless child, resembling a god, wept, making a loud wailing : "Who has taken away may son of excellent marks, endowed with good characteristics.

3-4. I had obtained the son by penance, charity, sacrifices, and vows difficult to practise, and with hard efforts. Who has kidnapped the son given to me by the magnanimous, pious Dattātraya, (after) being pleased." (Thus) she wept piteously.

5-9. "O son, O child, O dear child, O habitation of virtues, where are you ? Who has taken you away? Talk to me. You are undoubtedly the ornament of the entire lunar dynasty. Who has taken you away, you united with my life ? Who has today kidnapped my son, full of divine, good marks of a king and having lotus-like eyes ? What shall I do ? Where shall I go ? I distinctly know the deed I did in the previous existence: I (must) have repudiated a deposit; therefore my son is kidnapped. Or did I, a sinner, cheat someone in the former existence ? I am suffering a calamity due to that deed only, and not otherwise (i.e. not due to anything else).

10. I had become the snatcher of a gem. (Therefore) the gem in the form of my divine son, the mine of matchless virtues, is snatched away by destiny.

11. Or did I argue with a brāhmaṇa ? (And) is it the fruit, attended by the great grief for my son, of that act, that I have undoubtedly got ?

12. Or did I obstruct a child in my previous existence? Am I getting such a fruit of that sinful deed?

13. Or did I not give the food before the rite of the offering of food to all gods accompanied by the (seven) sacred utterances, to one who had asked for it ?"

14-15. Thus, O noble one, Svarbhānu's daughter Indumatī full of tenderness due to grief, being perturbed and heaving sighs like a cow bereft of her calf, fainted.

16. That king Āyu (also) was full of great grief and sorrow. Hearing that the boy was kidnapped the king gave up courage.

17. 'There is certainly no fruit of penance, nor is there the fruit of giving gifts, since my son has been thus kidnapped.

18-19. Through grace, Dattātreya formerly gave me a boon (in the form) of an unconquerable son, endowed with success and all virtues. How is that grant of boon impeded ?' Engrossed in thought like these, the king who was distressed, wept very much.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Nārada Assures of Nahuṣa's Return

Kuñjala said :

1-2. Then that Nārada came from heaven to king Āyu. Having come he said to him : "O king, why are you bewailing? O great king, O very intelligent one, knowing that the kidnapping of your son is beneficial to gods and others, do not bewail.

3-4. Being omniscient, virtuous, and equipped with all worldly knowledge, and full of (i.e. endowed with) all arts, your son wilt come (back). O great king, he who has taken away the boy, having virtues like those of a god, to his house, has certainly taken Death.

5. He, of a great valour and might, will bring about his end. O king, along with Śiva's daughter he will come to you.

6. Due to his own lustre the son will be like Indra and Viṣṇu. Due to his righteous acts he will enjoy the position of Indra."

7. Speaking like this to king Āyu that best divine sage suddenly left as the king with his servants was seeing.

8. When that holy Nārada, resembling a god, had gone, Āyu came to that queen and told her all that (Nārada had said).

9-15. (He said :) "O queen, due to Viṣṇu's grace, Dattātreya gave you, the auspicious one, a son, (like) the best god. O

you of an excellent face (i.e. O you beautiful one), my virtuous son will again come back, taking (with him) the head of that one who has kidnapped him. Nārada told (me) like this. O good one, do not grieve; and give up this great delusion of your mind which destroys the (fruit of the) good works that ought to be done." Hearing the words of her husband, queen Indumatī, was full of joy (due) to the (assurance of the) coming of her son. 'It shall be as is told by the divine sage. Dattātreya has given me the son, who will be ageless and immortal. There is no doubt about it. It appears to me like this about him.' Thinking like this, she saluted the best brāhmaṇa. "My salutation to that noble son of Atri, the giver of great prosperity, by whose grace I obtained a very wise, very virtuous and very meritorious son."

16. Speaking like this, that respectable lady, who was very much afflicted, knowing that son Nahuṣa would come back, ceased (speaking).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

Vasiṣṭha's Instruction to Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said :

1. Brahmā's son Vasiṣṭha, of great lustre and the best among the speakers, called that Nahuṣa and spoke these words (to him).

2. "Quickly go to the forest, and bring many sylvan products." Hearing the words of the sage, Nahuṣa came (i.e. went) to the forest.

3-4. There that mighty Nahuṣa heard some good (i.e. agreeable) account : "This is that pious and mighty Nahuṣa, the very wise son of Āyu, separated from his mother (right) from his childhood. Due to a great (i.e. painful) separation from him, the wife of Āyu is weeping.

5. Aśokasundarī practised a very difficult penance. When will that virtuous queen Indumatī see her son named Nahuṣa,

conversant with the practice of righteosuness, and formerly kidnapped by the demons ?

6-7. For the sake of Āyu's son the excellent, young daughter of Śiva i.e. Aśokasundarī practised, all alone, penance. When will she be united with this one (i.e. Nahuṣa) ?"

8-13. That pious Nahuṣa, full of doubt, heard such worldly words uttered by bards in the sky. Having takens ylvan products, having gone to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, having presented the sylvan products to pious Vasiṣṭha, and having joined the palms of his hands and with his neck devoutly bent down, he said to that wise Vasiṣṭha, the best among the ascetics : "Revered sir, listen to the words formerly uttered by a spy : 'This is Āyu's son, named Nahuṣa, who has been separated from his mother, Indumatī, by the very troublesome demons. That young daughter of Śiva practised very difficult penance for (obtaining) this wise Nahuṣa (as her husband).' O preceptor, I heard all this that they talked.

14-16a. Who is that pious Āyu ? Who is that virtuous Indumatī ? Who is that Aśokasundarī ? Who is called Nahuṣa? This is a doubt in my mind. You please dispel it. (Nahuṣa seems to be) some other very wise person. Where is that Nahuṣa? Tell me all that, O father and other things also (if any)."

Vasiṣṭha said:

16b-18a. That pious Āyu is a king, the mighty ruler of the earth. His wife is Indumatī, of a truthful nature and famous. On her, you, a son, abode of virtues and ornament of the lunar dynasty, were begotton by Āyu, the king of kings.

18b-22a. Śiva's beautiful, amiable daughter, adorned with virtues and form, and of a charming smile, by name Aśokasundarī, all alone practised penance in a penance-grove to obtain him (as her husband). The creator has fittingly and definiteely fashioned you as her husband. She practised profound meditation after resorting to the bank of the Ganges. Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, seeing that chaste, lovely lady with lotus-like eyes, and bright with penance, and endowed with beauty, generosity and virtues, all alone, was very much tormented by Cupid's arrows.

22b-26a. Going near her, he said to her : "Be my wife." Hearing these words of him, that devout lady said to him : "O Huṇḍa, do not do a rash act; do not talk like this again and again. O hero, you cannot get me, especially (when I am) someone else's wife. Destiny has formerly fashioned for me (i.e. as my husband) Āyu's son named Nahuṣa. There is no doubt that that very lustrous, intelligent Nahuṣa, a divine gift, will be (my husband). If you do otherwise (i.e. other than what I tell you), I shall give you a curse by which you will be reduced to ashes."

26b-33a. Hearing these words of her, he, very much tormented by Cupid's arrows, cunningly kidnapped her and took her to his own house. Having come to know about it she cursed that mean demon, O glorious one : "You will die at the hands of Nahuṣa." When you were not born (i.e. before your birth) she was born, as you are (now) telling. O hero, you are that son of Āyu, who was kidnapped by the sinful Huṇḍa, who was protected by the cook, and was sent to my hermitage through the female attendant. O child, I have again told you what the bards and kinnaras had made (you) hear (i.e. described) in the forest on seeing you. Kill that mean demon Huṇḍa, the doer of evil things; and wipe off the tears (of your mother who is) shedding them from her eyes. From here go to the bank of the Ganges and (you will) see the very mighty one (there). Having killed the lord of the demons, bring (her) from his gaol. Be the husband of her who is (known as) Aśokasuṇdarī.

33b-35. I have told you all this—the origin of this question.

Speaking (thus) to Nahuṣa, the very intelligent brāhmaṇa ceased (speaking). Having heard all that wonderful (account) told by that sage, the son of Āyu, thinking and desiring to kill him, became angry.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Vidvara, a Kinnara, Dispels Aśokasundarī's Apprehensions

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Having saluted, having propitiated and having taken the leave of Vasiṣṭha he, an archer, with arrows in his hand, went out (to the forest). Having well cooked the flesh of a black antelope that child, the good, virtuous, handsome son of Āyu, resembling a god, and endowed with godly qualities, was cleverly protected by her (i.e. that female attendant). With that meat which was well cooked, well dressed, boiled and tasty, the cook very gladly fed that wicked (demon) after talking to him. The demon ate that tasty and sweet meat. He was full of joy also. He went to Aśokasundarī.

5-6. With his mind overcome with passion he quickly said to her : "O auspicious one, your husband, Āyu's son, has been eaten up by me. O you of a charming body, resort to me only, and enjoy pleasures as desired by you. What will you do with that human being that is (already) dead?"

7-8a. Having heard (these words) the helpless daughter of Śiva replied : "The ageless and faultless husband is given to me by deities. Even the magnanimous gods have not perceived his death."

8b-10a. Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) her, that demon of wicked deeds, repeatedly laughing, said to her : "O beautiful lady, today only I ate up the flesh of the wicked Nahuṣa, Āyu's son, as soon as he was born."

10b-12. She, having heard these words, became extremely and fearfully angry. She who (always) stood by truth, and was purified by penance said : "With my mind restrained, I have practised penance. Āyu's son shall truly live long. O you of wicked deeds, if you desire to live, go from here. Otherwise, I will again curse you."

13-15. These (words addressed) by her to the king were heard by the cook. (He said :) "O great king, leave her, and resort to someone else." The wicked-hearted demon, Huṇḍa, directed by him quickly went out to his own wife. He did not at

all know the thing which the female attendant and the cook had done. He told the whole account to his wife.

Sūta said :

16-22a. That helpless Aśokasundarī, thinking about her dear lover and tormented by grief and sorrow, became emaciated due to that great (i.e. severe) penance. Repeatedly she thought: 'What would the demons, who know the means, not cleverly do by various means, and by exertion ? The best demons always live in various states of being. By the application of illusory methods I was formerly kidnapped by the demon. Like that the son of Āyu might have been killed. Thinking that luckily he might have been unharmed, he would even observe with great effort whether he has or has not perished. Is the exertion superior ? Or is the fruit of deeds superior ? How would an object, that is to be, perish ? Thence the Veda stands firmly. The speciality is conceived by gods. How will it be otherwise ?'

22b-24. The noble one again and again thought like this. (At that time) a kinnara named Vidvara, belonging to a great family, having a large body, having half human body (but) without wings, having two hands, and a flute in one hand, adorned with necklaces and bracelets, with his body besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), came (there) with his wife.

25-37. He said to that unhappy daughter of Śiva : "O respectable lady, what are you thinking about ? Know me, who have come here, to be Vidvara, a kinnara and Viṣṇu's devotee, sent by best gods. You need not at all be sorry about Nahuṣa. That sinful Huṇḍa has done every act to kill that intelligent (Nahuṣa); and O auspicious one, he has kidnapped Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa); but he has been protected by the gods by various means. O you auspicious one of large eyes, Huṇḍa thinks like this : 'I have kidnapped Āyu's son and have eaten him up.' That mean demon left after having told you (like this). That your very glorious husband will live due to the ripening of his own deeds and merit earned in his former existence. O glorious one, the wicked, very sinful killers, contaminating others' lustre, everyday show forth to destroy the glory of those to destroy whose life produced due to the strength of their merit earned by themselves (in the former existence), they desire. By many means like poison and

weapons they then desire to kill the meritorious person protected by means of meritorious deeds. O glorious one, the great sinners like Huṇḍa harass, with many kinds of delusions and obstructions, full of power, the meritorious one, who is well-protected by the employment of (i.e. because of his having done) good deeds and religious merit. O auspicious one, means—like amulets, spells, charms, weapons, fire, poison, binding—become useless. (Deities) protect the magnanimous one who is (already) well protected by divine merit. The doers of (charms etc.) are reduced to ashes, (while), he, the meritorious one, remains (unharmed).

38-47. O auspicious one, all deities are the protectors of Āyu's son. He is the store of religious merit and the treasure of penance. Therefore the brave Nahuṣa, the best among the mighty, is protected by means of that truthfulness, panance, merit, controls and restraints. Do not have agonizing pain; give up your groundless sorrow. The religious-minded one is living in a forest even without his mother and father. He lives alone in a forest, (is) looked after by ascetics. He knows the philosophy of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas and has mastered archery. O you of a beautiful (i.e. slender) waist, as the moon shines with his digits and lustre, he is shining with his arts. He, the killer of his brave enemies, the killer of his foes and dear to gods, shines by means of his lores, great religious merit, penance and glory also. He will have you after killing Huṇḍa, the lord of demons. The great devotee will be the sole ruler of the earth along with you, as Indra is in heaven. O auspicious one, from him you will obtain a good son, resembling Indra, knowing Dharma, eagerly engaged in protecting his subjects, named Yayāti; also a hundred daughters endowed with beauty, generosity and (other) virtues, due to whose merit you will go to Indra's heaven. O you respectable lady, Nahuṣa of a virtuous valour will enjoy Indra's position.

48-54. Your son will be religious-minded Yayāti, the great king, protector of the subjects and very kind to all beings. He will have four sons of great prowess, endowed with strength and valour and masters of archery : The first will be Turu, the second will be Puru, the third will be Uru, and the fourth will be brave Yadu. Like this, the sons will be very brave, lustrous, very

powerful, noble, and endowed with full lustre. Yadu's sons will be brave, valourous like lions. Well-being to you. Now listen to their names when I am telling them to you : Bhoja, Bhīmaka and Andhaka and Kuñjara also. (The fifth one) will be Vṛṣṇi by name, religious-minded and prop of truth. The sixth will be Śrutasena, and the seventh will be Śrutadhara. (The eighth will be) Kāladamṣṭra, very powerful, mighty and conqueror of (even) Death in a battle.

55-60. O you of an excellent face, Yadu's sons called Yādavas will be very brave. They will have thousands of sons and grandsons. O respectable lady, such will be the dynasty of Nahuṣa. Thus giving up sorrow, proceed happily. O you of an auspicious face, having killed the demon Huṇḍa, your very wise husband will come (to you) and will marry you. Hot tears due to grief fall from the eyes of Indumatī. He, the remover of the pride (of the haughty), will wipe them. Having made his father happy he will protect his subjects. O auspicious one, I have told you all this that the gods had said. Giving up your grief and sorrow, carry on happily."

Aśokasundarī said :

61. If he is ordained to be my husband by the deities when will he come ? O you who know Dharma, tell me the truth; increase my happiness.

Vidvara said :

62. O beautiful lady, listen. You will soon see your husband.

Speaking like this, the gandharva (? kinnara) went to the abode of gods.

63. Aśokasundarī, the daughter of Śiva, giving up desires, anger and greed, practised penance there only.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

Nahuṣa Gets Divine Weapons from Gods

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Having taken leave of all the sages and of Vasiṣṭha, the best of the ascetics, Nahuṣa being eager desired to go to the demon. Then all the sages like Vasiṣṭha, with penance as their treasure, congratulated the very mighty son of Āyu with blessing. All the deities in the sky joyfully beat drums and showered flowers on Nahuṣa's head.

4-5. Then the thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra) came there with gods and gave him weapons and missiles resembling the sun's lustre. O best twice-born, the best king took those divine missiles from the god, and due to that he became one of a divine form.

6. Then all the deities said to Indra: "O lord of gods, give a chariot to this Nahuṣa."

7-9a. Knowing the view of the gods, Indra, having called his charioteer, Mātali, ordered him, O twice-born: "O you very wise one, go to him, and carry him—the son of Āyu, ready to fight, in the chariot with the flag;" and he said to Indra: "I shall carry out your order".

9b-11. Speaking thus, he quickly went to Āyu's son, ready to fight. He told the king the words of the king of gods: "O you who know Dharma, 'be victorious in the battle by means of this chariot.' O lord of kings, thus, Indra has told you. Kill in the battle the demon Huṇḍa of a wicked heart."

12-13. Hearing (these words) the lord of kings, with horripilation due to joy (said:) "By the grace of the lord of gods, of the magnanimous Vasiṣṭha I shall kill in the battle the demon of a wicked heart, who deceived gods and especially me."

14-20. When Nahuṣa uttered these great words, the god holding a conch, a disc and a mace himself came there. Drawing out from (his own) disc a great disc resembling the sun's orb, blazing with burning lustre, with round spokes and bringing auspiciousness, the god gave it to Nahuṣa with great joy. Śiva gave him a very sharp lance endowed with lustre. With that excellent lance, he, ready to fight, shone like another lord Śiva,

the killer of Tripura. Brahmā gave him (the missile called) Brahmāstra. Varuṇa (gave him) an excellent noose, resembling the moon's lustre and a conch with an auspicious sound. Indra (gave him) the thunderbolt and (a kind of missile called) Śakti. Vāyu (gave him) a bow with arrows. Vahni (i.e. Fire) gave the magnanimous one, the fire-missile. (Thus) the divine weapons and missiles of various kinds were given by gods to that great-souled king of great glory.

Kuñjala said:

21-25. Then Āyu's son, the hero honoured by gods and greeted by sages knowing the true nature of Brahman with blessings, got into the chariot that was divine, lustrous, decked with gems, making a big sound due to the bells, and full of small bells. With that divine chariot the prince shone like the sun by means of his lustre on the divine path. Blazing like him with his lustre, he rushed quickly and speedily, with that magnanimous charioteer Mātali, towards the heads of the demons, like Vāyu that moves constantly, to the place where that sinful demon stood with his army.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

Nahuṣa Enters Mahodaya, the City of Huṇḍa

Kuñjala said:

1-5. When that brave Nahuṣa, comparable to the lord of gods, was going out to fight (with Huṇḍa), all women out of curiosity and with (i.e. singing) auspicious songs went there. The excellent women of gods, and kinnarīs, (all) eager through curiosity sang melodiously, O best one. Also the gandharva women endowed with beauty and ornaments went there where the king stood, through curiosity. The city of that wicked Huṇḍa was Mahodaya by name; it was everywhere adorned with divine groves (like) Nandana. It looked pleasant with houses having

seven apartments and with pitchers. The best city shone with great staffs with banners. The best city shone with (mansions) shaped like the peaks of Kailāsa, lofty, reaching the sky, divine and endowed with all glory.

6-10a. It was adorned with thickets of trees, groves, divine lakes resembling oceans and full of water and charming with lotuses and red lotuses. It shone with ramparts, great jewels and hundreds of upper stories and with moats full of clear water. It also shone with other great jewels and elephants and horses. It was crowded with good women and men of great brilliance. That (city) Mahodaya shone with many divine grandeurs.

10b-15. Nahuṣa, the great hero and best among kings, saw the city and a divine grove adorned with divine trees in the outskirts. The great hero entered it as a god enters the Nandana grove. The virtuous lord of kings entered the grove on the bank of a river in chariot along with that Mātali. Those divine, beautiful women came there. Gandharvas, the knowers of the essentials of music, extolled the best king with songs. All the (bards like the) sūtas and māgadhas praised the best king, Āyu's son, shining like the sun. Nahuṣa heard the sweet song repeated (i. e. sung) by the kinnaras.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

Aśokasnudarī has a Glimpse of Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Hearing that song sung by the celestial women and being affected by the songs and their introductory stanzas, that beautiful daughter of Śiva, pondering, quickly getting up from her seat, and being full of great enthusiasm, possessed of penance and devotion, and seeing the prince who resembled a god, whose lustre was like that of a divine form, whose body was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), who was adorned with divine garlands, who was graced with divine ornaments and garments, who was bright like the sun, who was having divine marks, (thought:)

5-7. 'Can he be a god, or a very wise gandharva? May he be the son of a nāga (snake) or a vidyādhara? How can he be born among the yakṣas, (when) I do not observe (such a form) even among gods? Even Indra might have been born as this hero (as is seen) from this ease (of him). May he be Śiva or is this Cupid? Or is he Kubera, Pulastya's son, and my father's friend?'

8. When she, the most beautiful and virtuous one was thinking like this, Rambhā, having come there with her great friends, smiled and said to her:

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Rambhā Acts as Aśokasundarī's Messenger

Rambhā said:

1. O auspicious one, abandoning the penance, what are you looking at? By pondering over a man your penance would perish.

Aśokasundarī said:

2-5. My mind was completely absorbed in penance. Gods, demons or serpents could not lead me away (from it). (But) O you glorious one, on seeing this one my mind becomes very uneasy. Going to him I desire to dally with him. It has become thus (i.e. so much) eager. O you beautiful one, such a change was (there) in my mind. Therefore, tell me its cause, if you know it well. The magnanimous gods have created me as the wife of Āyu's son. Why is my mind eagar to dally (with this man)?

Rambhā said:

6-11. O you glorious one, O you beautiful one, the ancient soul, Brahmā himself, of the form of knowledge lives in all embodied forms. Though he is bound by the organs of sense functioning to assist him, and full of the nooses of delusion, yet he is always perfect. He, (when bound by sense-organs) does not at all

know the Nature—the portion of the highest and the worldly knowledge: (yet) O beautiful one, this pure righteous soul knows (it). Though you, seeing this very intelligent one, have mental anguish, he abandons sin and runs to truth only. This son of Āyu is your husband. This is the truth. There is no doubt about it. (A lady like you) would entertain doubt by seeing any other man of sinful characteristics. Such is the ordinance, bound by the noose of truth which the gods have made that the son of Āyu will be her (i.e. your) husband.

12-16a. Like this was heard by the soul, O beautiful lady. Knowing the truth of its substance, he remained (there). It does not recognise that your husband has come. Knowing this your chief soul today only runs (after him). The soul knows everything. The soul is the ancient god. This is just that brave Nahuṣa, the lord of heroes. Therefore your heart goes to him; it desires a contact with the truth. Knowing that Āyu's son (will be your husband), it does not at all go to anyone else, O good lady.

16b-19. I have thus told you all that is perpetually in your mind. Killing the very fierce, mean demon Huṇḍa in a battle, he will take you to his own place—Āyu's excellent house. The best hero was kidnapped by the demon; (but) survived because of his religious merit. The best hero was separated from his relatives from his childhood. In the great forest he grew without his mother or father. Now with you only he shall go to his father's house.

20. Having heard these words of Rambhā, the daughter of Śiva full of great joy, said to (Rambhā) born from the ocean:

21-24. "This certainly is my very brave husband of a truthful nature. My mind, very much perturbed due to being full of grief, runs (to him). There is no other god like the mind that knows (things) definitely. O you of a charming smile, I really saw a fine picture—a man of divine characteristics and resembling Cupid. O friend, as my mind runs (after him) on seeing him, it does not run to any other man, O good lady. It does not think highly of any other man. We two shall go to him. Let our friends go home."

25. Knowing her to be eager to go to Nahuṣa, that Rambhā spoke like this and started going.

26a. Then that Rambhā said to her: "O respectable lady, why do you not go (with me)?"

Sūta said:

26b-28a. Reaching well with her friend Rambhā, Nahuṣa with marks of a hero, she sent her dear friend to his vicinity (i.e. to him): "O you illustrious one, go to Nahuṣa of a godly form, and tell him the account, and that I have come for him."

Rambhā said:

28b-29. O you (my) friend of a good vow, I shall do this which is very dear to you.

Saying so Rambhā went to prince Nahuṣa holding a bow and arrows, and as it were another Indra.

30-36a. Rambhā went to him and told him the excellent words of her friend: "O you glorious son of Āyu, I am Rambhā who has come to you. I have been sent by that daughter of Śiva, O hero. For you the lord of gods, the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī), the god have created this excellent and best gem of a woman in the form of your wife, difficult to be obtained in the worlds. This gem is difficult to be obtained by best men, gods along with Indra, devotees, gandharvas, serpents, siddhas and bards of meritorious marks. For you, it has come of its own accord. This gem of a woman is perfect and created with merit, O you very wise one. (It's) name is Aśokasundarī, who remained in penance for (obtaining) you. She practised very severe penance. She always longs for you. Realising this, O illustrious one, honour her who adores you. That beautiful lady does not at all solicit any other man than you."

36b-44. Nahuṣa heard and understood what she said; and replied: "O Rambhā, listen to my words. I know all that you have said before (i.e. to me). Formerly the noble Vasiṣṭha had told me. I know everything—her excellent penance (also). O auspicious one, listen to the reason by which there will be happiness (for both of us). 'Without killing the demon Huṇḍa I shall not go to the excellent lady. I know all this account and also that you are created for me, and that you have practised penance. There is no doubt that destiny has made you my wife. Resolving for (getting) me as your husband, you practised penance. From there the very wicked one took you, following restraints, away. That mean demon separated me, who was a child, from my father and

mother, (kidnapping me) from the lying-in-chamber, O respectable lady. Therefore I shall kill that Huṇḍa, the mean demon. Then I shall take you to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage.' Well-being to you, O Rambhā, tell like this to her who has done what is dear to me."

45-48. Thus dismissed by him, Rambhā again quickly came (back) so Aśokasundarī and told her all his (good words) in brief, O best dvija. That Aśokasundarī, understanding the good words of that great hero Nahuṣa, was full of joy. Then she stayed there with her good friend, Rambhā. (She said:) "I shall ever see what kind of valour my husband has."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Fight between Nahuṣa and Huṇḍa Starts

Kuñjala said :

1-3. Then all the demons, Huṇḍa's attendants, told Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, the good words—the conversation—between Nahuṣa and Rambhā as they had heard them. Having heard them, he got angry and said (these) words to his messenger : "O hero, go and know that man who converses with that daughter of Śiva."

4-8. Hearing the order of his master the demon left quickly. In a solitary place he said these words to Nahuṣa : "You stand round with a chariot along with horses and the charioteer, and with a bow and divine arrows, and you are fearful in an assembly. To whom to you belong ? By whom are you sent, and for what purpose ? Tell clearly to me all that this Rambhā and the other (one i.e.) Śiva's daughter told you today. How is it that you are not afraid of Huṇḍa, the destroyer of gods ? If you desire to live, tell me all this. Leave quickly, do not remain (here). The lord of the demons is difficult to put up with."

Nahuṣa said :

9. Know me to be the son of that powerful lord Āyu, who

is the king of the earth, (and know me) to be the destroyer of all demons, worshipper of gods and brāhmaṇas, and well known by the name Nahuṣa. O demon, in my childhood I was kidnapped by Huṇḍa, your master.

10-14. This daughter of Śiva also was formerly kidnapped by (that) demon. She practised severe penance for the death of Huṇḍa. (Tell Huṇḍa :) "O wicked one, I, who was taken away (when I was) a child from the lying-in chamber, and was handed over to the female attendant and the cook by you, the wicked-minded one, have today come to kill (you) the wicked demon Huṇḍa of sinful acts. I shall also take to Yama's abode other fearful demons." Tell the demon (Huṇḍa) like this : "O most sinful one, know me to be like this."

15-19a. That wicked-minded (messenger) having heard all those words of (i.e. spoken by) the magnanimous Huṇḍa, narrated them to Huṇḍa, after going to him. Having heard them from his mouth (i.e. as told by the messenger), the lord of the demons (i.e. Huṇḍa) got angry. (He thought :) 'Why was he not killed by the wicked cook and the female attendant ? Now he, a disease, that was ignored by me, has augmented. Now I shall kill in a battle this wicked son of Āyu along with this daughter of Śiva with these arrows sharpened on a grindstone.' Thinking like this, he said (these) words to his charioteer : "Make ready the chariot (yoked) with excellent and lucky horses."

19b-21a. Calling the chief of the army he, who was over-anxious, said to him : "Make my army ready; make ready the brave snakes, and horses with the riders, and the soldiers with the umbrellas and chowries. Quickly make ready today my army with (all) its four constituents."

21b-24a. Hearing the words of that Huṇḍa, the swift and very intelligent chief of the army did everything according to the proper procedure. He (i.e. Huṇḍa) surrounded by the complete army went to the battlefield to (fight) with the active hero Nahuṣa, wielding a bow and arrows, (seated) in Indra's chariot, best among the warriors, ready (to fight) on the battlefield, difficult to be obtained by (i.e. unassailable to) gods and demons. Gods of great prowess seated in their aeroplanes in the sky saw him full of bright flames, and as it were another sun.

Sūta said :

24b-30. Then all the demons showered him with excellent arrows. In the battle they fought with the magnanimous Nahuṣa by means of swords, nooses, large lances, (missile called) śakti and battle-axes. They were excited, and roared like clouds on a mountain. Seeing their heroism, the brave son of Āyu stretched his bow resembling Indra's weapon, with the twang of its string. O brāhmaṇas, Nahuṣa also made the sound of his great bow like the bursting (sound) of the thunderbolt. Due to that loud sound the demons trembled. They were dejected in mind and had their spirits broken in the great war.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Huṇḍa is Killed in the Battle

Kuñjala said :

1. Then that great soul, holding a bow, ready to fight and shining in the battle, like Death that was angry and desired to destroy the worlds, desired to kill the great demons.

2-3. He killed the demons with a number of mighty weapons resembling the sun's lustre and very bright. As the wind uproots trees, he killed the demons. As the wind shakes the divine mass of clouds, the king destroyed the intoxicated demons with very sharp excellent arrows.

4. All the demons could not (stand) the shower of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the magnanimous one. Some died, some fled, some escaped from the great war.

Sūta said :

5. Seeing the prince of a great lustre, very intelligent, and destroyer of great demons, the wicked-minded Huṇḍa became angry.

6. Going (near him) he stood thereafter saying these words: "Stop, stop, O son of Āyu, I shall today take you to Yama."

Nahuṣa said :

7. I am standing in the battlefield. See, I have come to kill you. I shall kill you, a wicked-minded demon.

8-9 Speaking thus, he, taking a bow and arrows like the flames of fire, shone in the battle with an umbrella being held (over his head). He said these words to Mātali, the charioteer of Indra: "Today you drive my chariot in front of Huṇḍa."

10-12. Thus addressed by the hero, the quick-footed Mātali drove the horses having the speed of a strong wind. Then the horses jumped as swans would fly in the sky. Reaching the sky with the chariot having a flag and with an umbrella having the moon's colour, the son of Āyu shone in the battle with lustre and valour as the sun shines (in the sky).

13-18a. Huṇḍa too, even when he remained in the chariot, shone with his own lustre, was equipped with all weapons and remained in a hero's vow. O you very wise one, at that time the battle between the two heroes caused amazement to the gods, was fierce and caused fear. At that time Huṇḍa struck the king between his two strong arms with well-whetted, sharp, excellent arrows with heron's feathers attached to them and with darts. When pierced on his large forehead with five arrows he got angry. The king wounded with arrows shone more at that time, like the rising ruddy sun with clusters of rays. With the golden arrows stuck into his body and with his body smeared with blood, the king shone like the sun in the sky in the morning.

18b-20. Seeing his valour, he said (these) words to the demon : "O demon, wait, wait for a moment; (just) see my dexterity." Thus speaking to the demon in the battle, he struck him with ten arrows. He struck him on the face, on the forehead. Due to that the very mighty (demon) fainted and fell down on the chariot, when gods from heaven were seeing.

21-24. Gods and bards and siddhas gave out cry of victory with joy. (They cried :) "Victory, victory, to you, O lord of kings;" (and) they blew conches repeatedly. That tumultuous noise made by the gods entered the cavities of the ears of Huṇḍa who had fainted. Hearing it, he took his bow and an arrow like a snake, and saying, "Wait, wait, I am not dead though you have

struck me in the battle", he endowed with quickness, struck Nahuṣa with twentyone arrows.

25-27. The demon pierced Nahuṣa with one arrow into his fist, with four sharp arrows between his arms; (pierced) his great horses with four sharp arrows, his umbrella with one arrow; (pierced) Mātali with five sharp arrows, the interior of the chariot with seven sharp arrows and the staff of the flag with three sharp arrows. Seeing the wicked one's seizing and aiming and discharging (the arrow) and his quickness, the deities were amazed.

28. Seeing his valour, the king (said to) the best demon : "You are brave, you are learned, you are wise, and are clever in fighting."

29. Speaking thus to the demon, the king, of sharp valour, stretched his bow, and pierced him with ten arrows.

30-33a. With three arrows he cut off the flag and it fell on the ground. With four arrows he knocked down his horses. The king of sharp valour cut off his umbrella; and with ten arrows sent his charioteer to Yama's abode. Having cut off his armour with ten arrows, he splithim. He pierced thelord of demons in all his limbs with thirty arrows. With his horses killed, he became chariotless.

33b-38. The archer, with arrows in his hand, and showering (Nahuṣa) with sharp arrows, ran to him. That demon holding a sword and a shield, ran to the king. The king cut off the sword of Huṇḍa, who was (thus) running (to the king). The king cut off his shield with sharp arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. Then that wicked-minded Huṇḍa, seeing around, took a mallet and he of sharp valour, quickly discharged it. The king then saw it coming with the speed of the thunderbolt, and by his valour he caused to fall down that mallet making a sound, with ten sharp arrows and with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows. Seeing the mallet, fallen in ten pieces on the ground, he raised his mace and ran to the king.

39-43. With a sharp-edged sword he cut off his arm, which fell down on the ground, with the mace, armlets and bracelets. Then, making a great sound like the bursting of the thunderbolt, and with his body smeared with blood and running in the great battle, he, full of great anger, desired to destroy the king. He,

the irresistible one, came near the king. The demon, struck on his chest by Nahuṣa with a missile called Śakti, suddenly fell on the ground like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt. When that demon fell on the ground, other demons went (i.e. fled) away. Some entered inaccessible places, some resorted to the other world.

44-45. When the magnanimous Nahuṣa had killed that great sinner, gods, gandharvas, siddhas and cāraṇas became very joyful. When the great demon was killed in the great war, all gods became very joyful; (and) Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa) having obtained her, of a divine form and thriving with penance, became glad.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Nahuṣa Marries Aśokasundarī

Kuñjala said :

1-3. That devout Aśokasundarī, auspicious and joyful, reaching, along with Rambhā, the powerful Nahuṣa, said to him : "I am your legal devout wife, as ordained by the gods. O hero, if you desire merit here (i.e. in this world, then please) marry me. Always thinking of you, I remained in penance. O best king, by virtue of my merit I have obtained you."

Nahuṣa said :

4-5a. If you, O good lady, are directed to be my wife, and for that you remained in penance, then after a short time, in accordance with the words of my preceptor, I shall be your husband. O you beautiful lady, we two shall go with this Rambhā.

5b-8. He, of a great glory, putting her and the beautiful Rambhā in his chariot, quickly went with the two in that excellent chariotto Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. He, of a great lustre and full of great joy, saw the brāhmaṇa (Vasiṣṭha) in the hermitage and with her (i.e. Aśokasundarī) saluted him. He narrated everything

to that magnanimous Vasiṣṭha as to how the battle took place on the battlefield and how that mean demon was killed by him.

9-12. Vasiṣṭha too, hearing about the activities of Nahuṣa, was full of great joy, and having congratulated him with blessings, the best sage got them married on an auspicious day when the auspicious moment had arrived in the presence of brāhmaṇas and fire. After congratulating the couple with blessings he sent them (telling Nahuṣa), "O you very intelligent one, go quickly and see your mother and father. Seeing you, let that your mother and your father grow with joy as the ocean grows on a full moon or a new moon day."

13-14. Thus (saying) the sage, the son of Brahmā, sent the hero (to his parents). He, of a quickpace, after saluting that best brāhmaṇa, went with Mātali in that excellent chariot to see his father and mother also.

Sūta said :

15. At that time the deities sent a celestial nymph by name Menikā. Āyu's wife (Indumatī) fell, due to great grief, into the ocean of sorrow.

16-18. To that illustrious queen Indumatī, she (i.e. Menikā) said : "O you fortunate one, give up your sorrow; see your son, with your daughter-in-law, (your son) who has come, endowed with a hero's glory, to the assembly after having killed the sinful demon who had kidnapped your son (i.e. Nahuṣa himself)." Menikā narrated to that Indumatī the good account of what Nahuṣa had done in the battle.

19-20. Having heard the words of Menikā, she, who was full of great joy, said in a faltering voice : "O friend, you are telling the truth. You have said to me what is very dear and like nectar and encouraging to my mind. I should give you my life etc. and even everything that I possess."

21-22. Having thus spoken to her (i.e. Menikā), she said these (words) to the king : "O great king, this excellent celestial nymph tells me that your very brave son has come now." Speaking thus to her husband, she, who was very much delighted, ceased speaking.

23-28. Hearing her words, the lord of kings said to his wife : "O you glorious one, formerly sage Nārada had told me :

'O king, you should never be worried about your son. Your son will come after having very bravely killed that demon.' The words which the sage had uttered formerly have come true. O queen, how will his words be otherwise (i.e. untrue) ? Dattātreya, the best among sages, is actually a god. Formerly, O queen, you and I served him by means of penance. He has given (us) this gem of a son, having Viṣṇu's portion. He shall always kill a great wicked-minded demon. Dattātreya has given me the best and very powerful son who is Viṣṇu's portion, and killer of all demons, and will look after his subjects."

29-31. Speaking thus to queen Indumatī, the king celebrated with great festivity his son's arrival. Being full of great joy he again remembered Viṣṇu, endowed with everything, accompanied by groups of gods, of the form of joy, the only highest object, the remover of pain, giving happiness and the great giver of salvation to good followers of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Nahuṣa's Consecration

Kuñjala said:

1-10. Nahuṣa with his wife and Rambhā came in that excellent, divine chariot of Indra to the city called Nāga which was endowed with all beauty, divine auspicious objects, which was adorned with mansions, which possessed golden portals, which was beautified with banners, and with the sounds of many musical instruments, and with panegyrists and bards. It was also adorned with auspicious men resembling gods in form, with women of divine forms and with elephants, horses and chariots. It was full of many auspicious sounds and sounds (of the recitation) of the Vedas, the sounds of music and musical instruments, and of flutes and lutes. He entered the best city full of all (kinds) of beauty. The hero honoured with the auspicious Veda recitation by brāhmaṇas saw his father and very meritorious mother. Being full of great joy, he saluted his

father's feet. That beautiful Aśokasundarī devoutly saluted the feet of both of them again and again. That Rambhā also saluted them and expressed her affection (for them). The prince having saluted his father and having talked to him inquired about the health of his mother and father. With horripilation due to joy the illustrious one (i.e. Āyu) spoke thus :

Āyu said :

11-12. On seeing you, O son, today only all (my) ailments have disappeared; both (my) grief and sorrow have gone (away); the world is delighted with great satisfaction. When you of a great prowess were born, I became blessed. Emancipating your race you have also emancipated me.

Indumatī said :

13-14. O illustrious one, as when the full moon and the new moon (day) arrives, the great ocean, seeing the lustre of the moon increases, similarly I have grown (with joy) on seeing you. I am glorified; I am very glad; I am full of joy. O you, destroyer of the pride (of your enemies), O you very wise one, on seeing you I have become blessed.

15-16. Then that auspicious queen Indumatī, having spoken like this to that son, embraced that excellent son, having smelt him on his head, as a cow smells her calf, and having greeted that son of the form of Nahuṣa, honoured him with blessings.

Sūta said :

17-19. Then that very glorious son narrated to his mother, the auspicious queen Indumatī, the account of his being kidnapped, the birth and acquisition of his wife, his battle with Huṇḍa, and the destruction of Huṇḍa. He himseif told in brief all that account giving delight, to his mother and father.

20-24. The mother and father, having heard about the valour and exertion of their son, were full of great joy and their hearts were full (of delight). Taking his bow and (seated) in Indra's chariot, Nahuṣa conquered the earth spreading over the seven islands along with towns. He presented the earth, full of wealth, to his father. Always giving joy to his father by means

of good acts, he made his father perform sacrifices like Rājasūya. Āyu's son made his parents rich by means of great sacrifices, gifts, vows, restraints and curbs, glory, meritorious and very prosperous sacrifices.

25-30. Then the gods having come to the excellent city called Nāga consecrated the noble Nahuṣa, the destroyer of heroes. The sages possessing great faculties and king Āyu consecrated him on his throne with Śiva's daughter. The very glorious and pious king Āyu, united with his wife, went with his own body to heaven, well honoured by gods and siddhas. Leaving the place of Indra he again went to Brahmā's world. Then well-honoured by sages and gods he went to Śiva's heaven. Due to his own deeds and the great lustre of his son the great king went to Viṣṇu's heaven, and the king lived (there) due to his religious merit. O illustrious one, men should produce such excellent merit by (performing) meritorious acts like this, not by other acts causing grief.

31-33. I have told you all the account of that king, as to how that pious Nahuṣa became the emancipator of his father, the supporter of the entire family, and very learned. O my son Kapiñjala, tell me what other things I shall tell you. The man who listens to such pious, pure account, endowed with glory, of Āyu's son, enjoys pleasures and obtains the place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

The Story of Kāmoda

Kapiñjala said :

1-6. O father, a beautiful lady was formerly weeping at the mouth of the Ganges. From her eyes tears fell into the great water. They sank into the Ganges and became lotuses. (These) flowers were of a divine nature, great, and fragrant. O father, O illustrious one, why did the pure tears fall from her beautiful eyes into the water of the Ganges ? A bearded man, having but

bones and skin left (on his body) and clothed in a long strip of cloth, collected those fragrant lotuses. Taking those divine (lotuses) of golden colour, he would worship Śiva with them. O you very intelligent one, tell me who that lady is and who that man is. Why does he lament after having worshipped Śiva ? If I am dear to you tell all this to me.

Kuñjala said :

7. O child, listen. I shall tell you the account of happenings relating to gods. (I shall also tell you) the account of the noble Viṣṇu that destroys all sins.

8-9. That Vihuṇḍa, the well-known son of that very mighty Huṇḍa who was killed by Nahuṣa in the battle, practised penance, after hearing that his father (i.e. Huṇḍa) along with his ministers and retinue was killed by the brave and mighty Nahuṣa, Āyu's son.

10-13a. Ready to kill the gods he angrily practised penance. All gods knew the valour of the wicked one which was augmented by means of penance, and knew him to be irresistible in the battle. (They said :) "Vihuṇḍa, the son of Huṇḍa, is out to destroy the three worlds." (Vihuṇḍa thought :) 'I shall wreak revenge for my father and shall kill human beings and gods.' The sinful one, a source of vexation to gods and brāhmaṇas, got ready and started doing harm, and harassed the beings.

13b-15a. Gods scorched by his lustre only and led by Indra, sought the shelter of the noble Viṣṇu, the god of gods; and they said to the god of gods, the lord of the world, and the holder of a conch, a disc and a mace : "Always protect us from the great fear due to Vihuṇḍa."

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

15b-19a. May all deities and great gods prosper with great happiness. I shall destroy the most sinful Vihuṇḍa, the source of vexation to the gods.

Speaking thus to those gods the very glorious Viṣṇu produced illusion and himself remained in the Nandana (grove). He took up an illusory form of a female endowed with merits. Viṣṇu's Māyā is glorious and deludes the entire universe.

Viṣṇu's Māyā took up a matchless form having a good figure and beauty to kill Vihuṇḍa.

Kuñjala said :

19b-24a. To kill the gods he went up the divine path. Then the lord of the demons saw the Illusion in the Nandana grove. The demon deluded by her with his heart rent by Cupid's arrows did not realise that the excellent woman was of the form of Death and his destruction. Seeing her shining like gold and shining with the wealth of beauty, Vihuṇḍa longed for her and he, the sinner, said to that excellent lady: "Who are you ? To whom do you belong? O you beautiful lady, O you who torture my heart, give me company. O you beautiful lady, by your company protect me, protect me. O you chief of deities, O you illustrious one, I shall give you all that, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons, which you ask for."

Māyā (Illusion) said :

24b-27a. O demon, if you have a desire to enjoy me, give me a present. Worship Śiva with seven crores of divine, fragrant flowers grown on Kāmoda, and difficult to be obtained (even) by gods. O noble one, put around my neck the garland made of those flowers. Give me this present. Then I shall be a very dear wife of you.

Vihuṇḍa said :

27b-31a. O respectable lady, I shall do so. I shall give you the present asked for (by you).

Overpowered by love the lord of demons wandered through groves that were auspicious and divine; but he did not find the tree called Kāmoda. He himself went everywhere and asked (people) about the tree. Distinguished people told him that there was no tree called Kāmoda. Thus asking (people) the wicked-souled one being very much tormented by the arrows of Cupid, went to Śukra, and with his neck bent down through devotion asked him (about the tree). (He said) : "Tell me about the charming tree called Kāmoda and full of flowers."

Śukra said:

31b-37a. O demon, there is no tree (called) Kāmoda. (However) there is a lady (named Kāmodā). When delighted by some incident she laughs, then, O demon, from her laughter are produced fragrant, excellent flowers. These divine flowers are of Kāmodā. There is no doubt about it. They are charming yellow flowers and have fragrance. Śiva fulfils the great desire of him who worships Śiva even with one flower (of Kāmodā). O demon, from her weeping also similar large (but) reddish flowers are undoubtedly produced. O demon, they have no fragrance. One should not touch them.

Hearing these words uttered by Śukra, he said : "O you son of Bhṛgu, where is that Kāmodā ?"

Śukra said:

37b-41. In the very auspicious Gaṅgādvāra, the destroyer of great sins, the city named Kāmoda is fashioned by the architect of gods. In that city called Kāmoda, lives a lady graced with divine possessions; she also shines with ornaments, and is well-honoured by all gods. You should go there only, and should worship that excellent celestial nymph. O demon, with some auspicious means, make her laugh.

Speaking thus to the demon, that lord of meditating sages, Śukra, possessing great lustre, ceased (speaking), and became engaged in his own work.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN

The Birth of Kāmodā

Kapiñjala said:

1-4. O father, from her laughter are produced very charming, divinely fragrant flowers, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods and demons; but, O you very intelligent one, why do all

deities long for them? Śiva is pleased when he is well-worshipped with the flowers (produced) from her laughter. Tell me in detail as to what merit the flower possesses. Who would be (i.e. is) that Kāmodā? Whose daughter is that excellent lady? (Tell me how) from her laughter good flowers are produced. Tell me about the merit. Tell me in detail her complete story.

Kuñjala said:

5-16. Formerly gods and great demons formed a great friendship and eager for (obtaining) nectar, they churned the milky ocean. Due to the churning done by the gods and demons four maiden-gems (came out), whom Varuṇa first pointed out and again Soma also. Then the nectar-containing pitcher was pointed out. The ancient group of the four maidens desired the well-being of the gods. The first one was Sulakṣmī by name. The second was Vāruṇī. (The third) was known as Jyeṣṭhā. The other one was called Kāmodā. Among them the excellent and best one was produced first. Therefore, O very intelligent one, she is known as Jyeṣṭhā, and is always worshipped in the world. Vāruṇī is of the form of a drink, and has come up from the foam of water. The one called Kāmodā, has come up from the ripple of the nectar. King Soma (i.e. the Moon) and Lakṣmī similarly sprang from the nectar. Soma became the ornament of the three worlds and dear to Śiva. Similarly Vāruṇī became the remover of death and disease among the gods. Jyeṣṭhā gave great merit to people desiring well-being. The goddess Kāmodā, giver of merit, sprang from the nectar. In the future she will have the form of a tree for the love of Viṣṇu. She will always delight Viṣṇu. She, the auspicious one, will be certainly (known) by the name Tulasī. There is no doubt that the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) will dally with her. Kṛṣṇa regards the obligations of him who takes (just) one Tulasī-leaf and offers it to Kṛṣṇa, who thinking, 'What should I give him?' becomes dear to him.

17-23. Thus this one named Kāmodā, formerly sprang up from the ocean. When the goddess, speaking in a faltering way due to joy laughs, charming, fragrant flowers fall from her mouth. He who, a diligent one, takes fresh, good flowers and would worship Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu (with them), has gods pleased with him, and they give him whatever he desires. When

she, grieved due to some misery, weaps, tears are produced in her eyes and they fall from them. O glorious one, they are also (turned into) charming, large flowers (but) without fragrance. He who worships Śiva with them, has sorrow and tormentation. There is no doubt about this. There is no doubt that gods give misery to that wicked-minded one who (even) once worships gods with such flowers. I have told you this excellent account of Kāmodā.

24-26. Then Kṛṣṇa thought after seeing the valour and cruelty of Vihuṇḍa, the exertion and violence of the sinner, and sent Nārada (to him telling Nārada): "Delude this irresistible one." Hearing the words of that magnanimous Viṣṇu, Nārada went to that wicked lord of demons, who was going to Kāmodā, and with a smile, said to him:

27-28. "O lord of demons, where are you, (so) eager, now going hurriedly and for what work? For whose work (are you going)? Who has prompted you?" Having saluted Nārada, the son of Brahmā, with the palms of his hands folded, he replied: "O best brāhmaṇa, I have set out for Kāmodā-flowers."

29-36. The pious one (i.e. Nārada) said to him: "What purpose will the flowers serve for you?" He again told the best brāhmaṇa the reason for his act. "In the region of the Nadana-grove, there is an excellent lady. On seeing her I am influenced by (the passion of) love. O best brāhmaṇa, she told me: 'With seven crores of flowers growing in Kāmodā, worship Śiva. Then I shall be your very dear wife. There is no doubt about this.' For that I am today proceeding to the city called Kāmodā. Listen, now I am longing for her, born from the ocean. I shall make her laugh with loud laughters delighting the mind. The illustrious one, being pleased will repeatedly laugh. Her faltering laughter will augment my undertaking, O brāhmaṇa. From that laughter divine flowers will fall (down). With them I shall properly worship (Śiva) the lord of Umā. Śiva, the lord, the controller of all beings and the creator of the world being pleased by that offering of worship will give me (its) fruit."

Nārada said ;

37-43. O demon, you should not go to that best city called Kāmodā. The very intelligent Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all demons

stays there. O demon, I shall tell you about the way by which the flowers called Kāmodā will fall into your hand. There is no doubt that the divine flowers will fall into the water of the Ganges. Being drifted by the divine water (of the Ganges) they will come (to you) immediately. You (please) take those very charming and large (flowers). Taking those flowers you accomplish what is desired by your mind.

That pious Nārada, having (thus) deluded that best demon, again thought to himself : 'Being grieved in what way will she shed tears ?' When Nārada was thinking like this, that moment an idea struck him, and he went to the city of Kāmodā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTY

Nārada on Dreams

Kuñjala said :

1-4. Then Nārada saw the divine city called Kāmodā, which was crowded with gods and rich objects satisfying all desires. Reaching Kāmodā's house, the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada) entered it. Then he saw Kāmodā, possessing all desired objects. She honoured the brāhmaṇa with good words like 'Welcome (to you).' The best brāhmaṇa, seated on a divine seat asked her: "Are you living happliy, O good lady, sprung from Viṣṇu's lustre ?" Having greeted her with blessings he (also) asked her about her well-being.

Kāmodā said :

5. By your grace and Viṣṇu's grace, I am living happily. O you highly intelligent one, tell me the reason for which (you made me) answer (your) questions.

6-9. O best sage, a great delusion is produced in my body. It is greatly destroying my body, and is pervading all the worlds. Therefore sleep is generated (in my body) as it well abides in a mortal. O sage, I who was asleep saw a fearful dream. O best brāhmaṇa, someone having come before me said : "The unmani-

fest Viṣṇu will desire contact with the worldly existence. Since then I am occupied with grief, O you very intelligent one. Tell me the reason for that. You are best among those who possess knowledge.

Nārada said:

10. O good lady, dream (of four kinds), viz. gouty, bilious, due to excess of phlegm, and having a complicated derangement of the three bodily humours, is (seen) among human beings. There is no doubt about it.

11-15a. O beautiful lady, neither dream nor sleep exists among gods. The best dream is seen at the time of sunrise. A good (i.e. an auspicious) dream gives human beings the fruit of their religious merit. O you auspicious one, I shall tell you (about) another cause of dream. O you beautiful one, water shakes due to the rockings of great wind. From that mass of water small drops of water are split. O auspicious one, these pure drops of water fall out. They again disappear. Thus they become manifest and unmanifest. O beautiful lady, listen. The occurring of a dream is said to be like that.

15b-19. The (supreme) soul is pure, detached, and is free from love and hatred. After having excelled the objects consisting of the five elements, he remains quite steady. He shines among the twenty-six good elements. The pure soul is alone, eternal and is united with Prakṛti (i.e. the original source of the material world). When due to her modes of the nature of wind he moves from his place, another lustre resembling that of the soul is produced. The auspicious name 'inner soul' is given to it only. O auspicious one, as the drops of water are separate from it, in the same way the lustre of the soul is called the inner soul.

20-26. He is the earth, he is the wind, he is the ether, he is the water, he alone shines. These five great ones are fashioned formerly. They have come up from the lustre of the magnanimous soul, and they become united when they are associated with him. Due to the great fault of the natural temperament they destroy that body, and repeatedly desire another. This is their sport and pastime which is the cause of (their) connection with creation. The ripple of water is produced and disappears. It rises and again it disappears. There is no doubt that their (behaviour) is

like the illustration of the water. O respectable lady, the soul does not perish; fire or wind also does not perish. Earth and ether do not perish, nor does water perish. All the five come up and go away with the soul. O auspicious one, these soul etc. are of eternal nature.

27-43a. It is the body alone that would perish; it is an aggregate of them. He is miserable due to the blemishes of the objects of sense and love and hatred. There is no doubt about it. After the end of the body lives the (individual) soul that is similar to it. As like the spark of fire the soul shines, so the manifest and unmanifest comes to light—(or) is created. The pure soul is the highest Brahman, it is eternally awake; but the inner soul is bound by the great constituents of Prakṛti. When they are well-fed after having eaten food, the inner soul would be happy. Due to great happiness delusion is produced and due to it the mind errs. Then is produced sleep, which is of the nature of darkness (or ignorance) and increasing repose. When the sun would go along the path of Nādī (?) after having crossed Meru, then night would occur till the sun does not shine. The inner soul, when free from the darkness of the objects of sense, shines with the modes of the nature of the elements. The soul is seized by bodies of the former existences and nourished by the five elements. O you highly intelligent one, he goes to a high or a low position. The soul bound by faults is taken to the worldly existence. The individual soul protects the body, the middle one remains behind. The strong (vital air called) udāna throbs, and from that sound is produced. As a dry bellows when filled with air heaves, similary samudāna strongly breathes due to sound. Udāna would be powerful due to the prowess of the soul. The body thus deluded becomes almost dead. Then that very delusive sleep goes (i.e. spreads) over his limbs. It proceeds over the heart, neck, mouth, tip of the nose. Contracting his hands he would remain. The air named Udāna is produced in the circle of the navel due to the prowess of the soul. He is very strong and checks power. There is no doubt that as the holder of a wooden wedge remains when tied with a rope, similarly, the vital air is well-connected with the soul. O you of an auspicious face, the vital air is connected with the inner soul. Having knowledge and reddened the inner soul runs. Recollecting the abodes obtained in the

former existences, he runs there. Remaining there the very wise one enjoys as he likes.

43b-50. Thus the inner soul sees dreams of various kinds. He sees the excellent ones, opposite of them, (all) united with his acts. He sees mountains, great inaccessible places, and high and low places. Know that to be due to wind. I shall now tell you about (the dream) caused by phlegm. He sees water, a river, a lake and places of water. O respectable lady, he sees fire and ample, excellent gold. Know that (dream) to be caused by biliousness. I am telling you what will happen (when a dream is seen). When a dream is seen in the morning, something nice will take place. It is united with one's acts, and shows gain or loss, O beautiful lady. O you of an excellent complexion, I have told you about the period of a dream. That which will happen will happen in Viṣṇu's case also. For that you saw the dreem—you saw that bad dream.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

The End of Vihuṇḍa

Kāmodā said :

1-3. He is said to be soul, whose limit or form (even) all deities do not know, and in which all this is merged; and the expansion of whose illusion is this worldly existence. Listen, O Nārada. For what reason does my lord, the master of the world go to the worldly existence ? A man, who is bound by sinful and even meritorious acts, moves to the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, tell (me) why Viṣṇu would go to worldly existence ?

Nārada said :

4. O respectable lady, listen, listen to what the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) did. In front of Bhṛgu he took a pledge : "I shall protect the sacrifice."

5-8. But at the words of Indra, Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) suddenly left the best sacrifice and went to fight with demons. When the god left the sacrifice and went (to fight with the demons),

then the best wicked-minded demons came and destroyed the entire sacrifice. That Bhṛgu, the best among the meditating saints, cursed him : "Censured by my curse, have ten existences. Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) will take the fruit of his own act." For that reason, O respectable lady, you saw the bad dream.

9-21. Saying so, that brāhmaṇa, Nārada, went to Brahmā's heaven. Due to the great misery of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) she was afflicted at that time. The young lady wept piteously and repeatedly (expressed her grief by) uttering words like 'alas'. O son, listen, she sat on the bank of the Ganges near the water; and due to grief she shed tears from her beautiful eyes. Those tears shed by her fell into the water of the Ganges; and her tears sank just into the water, and they again sprang up in the form of lotuses. Drifted in (the stream of) the water of the Ganges, they flowed. The best demon, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, saw them. Though told by the sage (viz. Nārada) he did not realize that they were due to grief. The demon being full of great joy, took them. That lord of demons, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, would worship (i.e. worshipped) Girijā's husband (i.e. Śiva) with those seven crores of blooming lotuses. Then the mother of the world got angry, and said (these) words to Śiva : "O you highly intelligent one, see the impious act of this demon. With his mind overpowered by the passion of love, he is taking the lotuses, sprung from grief, and gone to (i.e. found in) the water of the Ganges. With those flowers, sprung from grief and sorrow, and causing distress and tormentation, the wicked-minded one would worship (you). How would great felicity be possible for him ?" "He will succeed in the same manner as he would worship me. He is bereft of truth and meditation. He has set his mind on Kāmodā. He has been (a demon) of a bad behaviour. O goddess. kill him with your lustre." Hearing these words of the noble Śiva, (she said :) "O Śiva, by your order, I shall destroy him only."

22-29. Saying so, the goddess (Pārvatī) remained (there) desiring to kill that Vihuṇḍa. She thought of a means to kill him. Taking up an illusory form of a magnanimous brāhmaṇa, she would worship (i.e. worshipped) lord Śiva with good flowers of Pārijāta. That wicked demon, overpowered by passion of love,

very much afflicted, thinking about her, and his mind set upon her would come (there) and destroy that divine worship. The sinful demon, tormented by Cupid's arrows remembered that great Illusion of Viṣṇu, seen before. Merely by remembering her, he (tormented) by strong Cupid (i.e. feeling of love), and afflicted by the grief due to separation (from her), he wept again and again. Overpowered by Death, the wicked-minded one took those (lotuses) sprung from grief, came there, desiring to worship the great lord (Śiva). Having destroyed the worship offered by goddess (Pārvatī), he would worship (i.e. worshipped Śiva) with (the lotuses) sprung from grief, through great greed. Tears fell continuously from the eyes of the wicked one on the top of the Phallus.

30. The goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) with (i.e. who had taken up) the form of a brāhmaṇa said to him, O you very intelligent one : "Who are you that worship the god with your mind always full of grief.

31. Your tears, impure, due to grief, are falling on the head of the god. Tell me the meaning of this."

Vihuṇḍa said:

32-36a. Formerly I saw a lady, the wealth of all blissful things, endowed with all (good) marks, and a great abode of Cupid. Through attraction for her, being parched by Cupid, I became distressed. She said (to me) : "For union (with you) give me an excellant share (of your wealth). Worship the great lord with flowers springing from Kāmodā and difficult to be obtained. Throw round my neck the garland made of those flowers. Worship the great lord with flowers numbering seven crores." For her I am worshipping the lord who gives the fruit (of one's act) with the flowers of Kāmodā, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons."

Śrīdevī (*i.e. Pārvatī*) spoke :

36b-38a. Where is the devotion, where is the meditation, where is the knowledge of you, the wicked-minded one ? God has absolutely no connection with you. Tell me now as to how the excellent form of Kāmodā is. Where did you get the good flowers sprung from her laughter ?

Vihuṇḍa said :

38b-41a. I do not know devotion or meditation. I have never seen her. I have been everyday collecting them from the water of the Ganges. With those I worship Śiva alone. (This is what) I (have to) say. Magnanimous Śukra also told it to me. On his word I am everyday worshipping the lord of gods. I have now told you all that you asked me about.

Śrīdevī said :

41b-51. O wicked one, every morning you are worshipping the Phallus with flowers sprung from the weeping of Kāmodā due to grief. Obtain the fruit in the same way as you have worshipped the lord of lords with flowers. Having destroyed the divine worship you are worshipping (the lord) with flowers sprung from grief. This very terrible sin has arisen in your case. Therefore I will give you punishment. Enjoy the fruit of your deed!

Hearing her words he, dragged by Death, said to her : "O you wicked one, O you of a bad conduct, O you who are spoiling my undertaking, I shall undoubtedly kill you with this sword only." Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, he took the sharp sword and the wicked-minded demon, desiring to kill him, ran to him. That goddess, the spouse of the lord, who was in the form of a brāhmaṇa, got angry. Seeing Vihuṇḍa to have come to her seat, she sent out a 'hum' sound. Due to that 'hum' sound, the mean demon fell down unconscious, like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt by (Indra) taking many forms. When that demon, destroying all people, fell down, people obtained peace, free from all misery and tormentation. For this reason, O child, that beautiful lady, with her mind full of grief, is lamenting on the bank of the Ganges. I have told you all this that you had asked.

Viṣṇu said :

52. O king, speaking thus to his good son, very intelligent Kuñjala, the lord of birds, ceased (speaking). He did not say anything more.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Dharmaśarman's Account

Viṣṇu said :

1-5. That righteous and very intelligent bird Kuñjala, having thus spoken to his sons, ceased speaking. He did not say anything to them. The best brāhmaṇa remaining under the bunyan tree said to that great parrot : "Who are you, explaining Dharma while remaining in the form of a bird? Are you a god, or a gandharva, or are you a vidyādhara? Due to whose curse did you obtain this very sinful birth in the form of a parrot? O parrot, due to what do you possess such knowledge which is beyond the reach of senses? Of what great religious merit or penance is it the fruit? O you very intelligent one, why are you staying here in this disguise? Tell me the origin: whether you are a siddha or a god."

Kuñjala said :

6-12. Oh! you have secured divine faculties; I know you, your excellent family and your name. (I know) your learning, and the power of your penance. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you everything as to why you are roaming over the earth. O you of a good vow, welcome to you. Sitting on an auspicious seat, resort to the cool shade. The origin of Brahmā is the Unmanifest one. From him Prajāpati was born. He the twice-born was Bhṛgu, endowed with virtues and a brāhmaṇa resembling Brahmā. His (son) was Bhārgava, who knew the essential nature of Dharma. In his family, you, Cyavana, are (born and) are famous in the world. O brāhmaṇa, I am not a god, I am not a gandharva, nor again I am a vidyādhara. O brāhmaṇa, listen to what I am going to say. A best brāhmaṇa was born in the family of Kaśyapa. He knew the sum and substance of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He explained all acts. He was well-known as a vidyādhara and was endowed with a (noble) family and character. O brāhmaṇa, he then shone (i.e. became famous) by his wealth, conduct and penance.

13. Three sons were born to that vidyādhara: Vasuśarman, Nāmaśarman and Dharmaśarman were the three (sons).

14. Of them I am the youngest, Dharmaśarman destitute of virtues. My brother Vasuśarman knew the meaning of the Vedas and sacred treatises.

15. He was well-endowed with conduct (i.e. was endowed with good conduct), and with excellences like learning. Nāmaśarman was very wise and like him (i.e. Vasuśarman) excelled in virtues.

16-17a. O you best one, listen, I alone was born a great fool. O brāhmaṇa, I never learnt the excellent purport of scriptures. Nor did I ever go to the excellent abode of a preceptor.

17b-18. Therefore, my father thought about me like this: 'The name of this son, viz. Dharmaśarman is meaningless. On the earth he is born neither as a learned one nor as a mine of virtues.'

19-24. Thinking like this, the pious one being very much afflicted, said to me : "O son, go to the preceptor's house (and) obtain the import of learning." Having heard these good words of my father, (I said to him :) "O father, I shall not go to the preceptor's house, which is very painful, where there is beating everyday, where there is knotting of the eyebrows etc. and where there is crying (daily); food is not seen there (even) by (doing) work; O best one, (please) listen. There is no sleep by day or at night; and there is no means of pleasure. Therefore, O father, it is full of grief. I shall not go to the preceptor's house. I shall not learn, I am eager to play. O father, by your favour, I shall eat, sleep and play happily and vigilantly day and night with children.

Knowing me to be a fool the pious one, being extremely grieved, said to me :

Vidyādhara said :

25-26. O son, do not act rashly. Exert yourself for (getting) knowledge. By means of learning happiness, glory, matchless fame, knowledge, heaven and salvation are obtained. Therefore, obtain learning (i.e. be learned). Knowledge is a source of unhappiness in the beginning, but later it gives happiness.

27-31. Therefore, O son, acquire knowledge, go to the preceptor's house.

I did not follow the words (of advice) of my father. Everyday I stayed here or there, and squandered money. O brāhmaṇa, people ridiculed and condemned me. I had then a sense of shame destroying life. O brāhmaṇa, I was ready to obtain knowledge. 'Which preceptor should I request ?' With this thought I was anxious and full of grief and sorrow. 'How shall I acquire learning ? How shall I have virtues ? How will heaven be possible for me ? How shall I achieve salvation ?' O brāhmaṇa, thinking like this, I reached old age.

32-39. Some time, I being grieved, sat in a temple. Impelled by my good fortune, a siddha came (there). He was without refuge (i.e. alone); he had overcome his hunger; was always joyful and desireless; O brāhmaṇa, he resorted to solitude; he possessed deep abstract meditation and had controlled his senses. He had been completely absorbed in the highest Brahman, and possessed knowledge, meditation and concentration of mind. O brāhmaṇa, I resorted to him who was of the form of knowledge and very intelligent. With a pure heart, and with devotion, I, having bowed my head, saluted the illustrious one and stood before him. I had become miserable and also luckless. O brāhmaṇa, he asked me : "Why are you suffering ? For what purpose are you experiencing misery like this ?" O best brāhmaṇa, that learned meditating saint thus spoke to me. I, a great fool, told him all my former account; (and asked him). "How can one be omniscient ? For this reason I am very unhappy. You are always my refuge." The illustrious one told me the entire means of knowledge.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Kuñjala's Story: A Preceptor Is a Holy Place

The siddha said:

1-16. Listen, I shall tell you the nature of knowledge. Knowledge has no body, no hands, no feet, and no eyes. It has no nose, no ears. Knowledge does not have the collection of bones. Who

indeed has seen knowledge ? What are its characteristic marks? It is without any form, it is eternal. The omniscient one knows everything. The sun illumines by day; the moon illumines at night; a lamp would illumine (i.e. illumines) the house. These remain in the world. O best one, listen, (I shall tell you) by what lustre is that place seen ? Fools, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā do not obtain it. Knowledge remaining in the body is inflamed by concentration and is matchless. That (highest) place will be seen through that (knowledge) and not by means of the moon, the sun etc. Knowledge is without hands and feet. It is eyeless, and is without ears. It moves everywhere. It grasps and sees everything. O best brāhmaṇa, it smells everything; it does hear; there is no doubt about this. There is no lamp like knowledge for the destruction of all darkness (of ignorance). It is seen in the heaven, on the earth, in the nether world—at every place. Those of wicked minds are not conscious of the knowledge that remains in the body. I shall explain to you the place of knowledge, from which knowledge springs up. O brāhmaṇa, it has always been kept in the hearts of beings. He who always desires to burn with the fire of discrimination the great sensual pleasures like sex and great allurements, becoming full of all tranquility, would crush objects of senses. Then would knowledge be born manifesting the full truth. This knowledge has the first principle as its basis; it is spotless and it manifests everything. Therefore have tranquility which enhances all pleasures. Be equanimous towards your enemy and your friend; and always restrict your food and control your senses. You should not form friendship (with anyone); enmity should be cast at a distance. Being without attachment, being desireless, and having resorted to a solitary place, you will possess spiritual knowledge, explaining everything. O child, there is no doubt that by my grace you, remaining at one place, will know the account of what is taking place in the three worlds.

Kuñjala said:

17-19. O brāhmaṇa, that siddha showed me the nature of knowledge. I always remained within his words (i.e. obeyed him). I am pervaded by his existence. By the favour of that good preceptor, I, (even though) seated at one place, know everything

that takes place in the three worlds. I have told you my entire account. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what else I should tell you.

Cyavana said:

20. How did you, the best among the learned, reach (i.e. get birth in) the species of parrots ? Tell me the reason of it that will dispel all my doubt.

Kuñjala said:

21-27. Sin is produced through contact, and also merit is produced through contact. Therefore an honest person should avoid a worthy (person) or the opposite of him. (Once) a sinful hunter had brought a young one of a parrot after catching it. He was eager to sell it. Seeing it to be beautiful and speaking agreeably and cleverly, a brāhmaṇa took (i.e. purchased) it, and affectionately gave it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, everyday I remained in intellectual meditation. Due to its child-like nature it perched on my hand out of curiosity. O you best brāhmaṇa, I, with my mind always set upon the parrot of the form of (i.e. like) my son, was infatuated by its impatient words. It too used to instruct me : "O father, father, (please) be seated; O glorious one, go for a bath; now worship the god." It would talk to me in such pleasant words. Due to the diversion caused by its words I forgot my excellent knowledge.

28-33. (Once) I went to a forest for (collecting) flowers and enjoying fruits. The bird was taken away by a cat to cause me (i.e. which caused me) grief. I heard from my well-behaved associates living in my company that the bird was killed by a cat and eaten by it only. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, hearing that the bird talking agreeably was dead I was extremely afflicted with great grief and unhappiness. I was bewildered due to grief on this account and was very much pained. O best brāhmaṇa, I was caught in a great mesh of infatuation. With my mind moved by infatuation I cried: 'O Rāmacandra, O king of parrots, O lord of celebrity', O brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, now listen: then I became tormented with grief and separation due to my act.

34-38. I forgot the knowledge made clear to me by the siddha also. I, tormented with grief, remembered that parrot

speaking agreeably. O Bhārgava, crying like: 'O child, O child, who, except you, will now advise me with sentences, with well-formed words. O lord of birds, having pleased me with wonderful stories, and abandoned me in this solitary garden, where have you gone ? Tell me now by which fault I am stained.' Being perplexed I lamented with (i.e. uttering) such piteous words, and was very much tormented with grief.

39-42a. Due to that embarassment and deluded by affection for it I died. O best brāhmaṇa, I was born with that temperament and thought with which I died. I was put in the womb which caused knowledge and remembrance (in me). I remembered the former deed done by me—a sinner and a fool. (I thought:) 'What have I, whose spirit is not disciplined, to do ?' Being in the womb, I thought about it only.

42b-53. Due to that I obtained knowledge which was pure and which manifested everything (to me); and by the grace of that preceptor I got excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, by the clean water of his words the dirt of my body—internal and external — was washed, and it was made pure. I obtained the birth of a bird as a parrot. O brāhmaṇa, when I, thinking of the parrot—thus conceiving thoughts about it (only), died, I was again born on the earth in the form of a parrot. Beings are born with that form, and are intent upon that, have those virtues, that appearance, about which thoughts occur to them at the time of their death. O best brāhmaṇa, O you very intelligent one, there is no doubt that due to the thought at the time of my death I obtained incomparable knowledge here (i.e. in my existence as a parrot). Therefore, I (am able) to see what has taken place and what will happen. There is no doubt that even though I am staying here I know the entire present due to my knowledge. O very wise and very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, for the emancipation of human beings moving in the mundane existence there is no holy place cutting the bonds (of karman) like a preceptor. O Bhārgava, listen; I have told you all this. O Brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you all that you had asked. The holy place (in the form) of a preceptor removes all external dirt from a place on the land or in water. The holy place in the form of a preceptor would

destroy sins committed in other (i.e. former) births. This moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor) is excellent.

Viṣṇu said :

54. O best king, that very intelligent parrot, having thus explained the truth to that noble Cyavana, ceased (speaking).

55. I have explained to you this excellent moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor). Well-being to you; ask for a boon that you have in your mind.

Vena said :

56-57a. I do not desire a kingdom; nor do I long for anything (else). O Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), with my body (intact) I desire to reach your body. If you desire to grant a boon I think (you should give me) this boon.

Viṣṇu said :

57b-62. O king, perform a horse sacrifice and Rājasūya sacrifice. O you very intelligent one, make presents of cows, land, gold, water and grains. By making presents a terrible sin like killing a brāhmaṇa perishes. There is no doubt that by making gifts all the four goals of human life are definitely accomplished. Therefore, O king, presents should be made dedicating them to me. I fulfil the intention of the person with which he gives (presents) dedicating them to me. Due to your having seen the sages and having come in contact with them, the heap of your sins has dropped down. There is no doubt that at the end of the sacrifice you will reach my body.

Speaking thus to that Vena Viṣṇu vanished.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Pṛthu's Righteous Rule

Sūta said :

1. When Viṣṇu disappeared, that very intelligent king Vena became anxious as to where the lord of gods had gone.

2-3a. Being full of great joy and having pondered the best king having called the greatest king with sweet words, then said to that magnanimous one with great joy.

3b-6. "O son, you my son have emancipated me from a great sin in the world. O Pṛthu, now you have made bright my dynasty. I ruined it with my faults; you have illumined it with your virtues. I shall perform a horse-sacrifice and shall give many presents. Due to your graciousness I shall today bodily go to Viṣṇu's heaven. O you best and very prosperous king, gather the necessaries (for the sacrifice). O you blessed one, invite brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas."

7. Thus was ordered Pṛthu by the noble Vena. The high-souled (Pṛthu) respectfully said to his father :

8. "O great king, rule over the kingdom; enjoy divine, human and righteous pleasures agreeable to you. Offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu."

9-14. Speaking thus to his father, intent on knowledge, and saluting him, the lord of the earth (i.e. Pṛthu) carefully took his bow with arrows and ordered all his soldiers : "Proclaim (my order) on the earth: No sin should be committed through the deeds of three kinds. He who, having violated the order of king Vena, will commit a sin, will be killed. There is no doubt about this. Gifts should be given; and O all men, setting your mind on him and being free from jealousy, offer sacrifices to Viṣṇu." O brāhmaṇas, having given such an instruction Vena's son went to a penance-grove for (practising) penance. Giving up all faults and restraining his senses from their objects, he remained without food for a hundred years.

15. Being pleased with his penance, Brahmā said to Pṛthu : "Tell me the reason for which you are practising penance."

Pṛthu said:

16-20. My father Vena is very intelligent and glorious. Let Viṣṇu (himself) cut off the head of that person who in Vena's kingdom commits a sin. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible disc. Let the heads of those who desire to commit sins mentally, through (physical) deeds or words, be snapped like a ripe fruit from a tree. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible great disc. Listen, O lord of gods. I desire this boon only from you. If you, O lord of gods, desire to grant a boon, then do that by which my father is not stained by the sins of his subjects. O you four-faced (Brahmā), give (i.e. satisfy this) best desire; my salutation to you.

Brahmā said :

21-26. Let it be so, O glorious one; your father is absolved. He is guided by Viṣṇu and by you, his son, O Pṛthu.

Having thus told (i.e. given a boon to) Pṛthu, the lord left. Pṛthu came back and became (engaged) in royal duties. O best brāhmaṇas, nobody committed a sin in the kingdom of the son of Vena. The head of him who conceives a sin through the deeds of three kinds, is cut off as with disc (by Viṣṇu). Since then nobody committed a sin. Thus was the order of the magnanimous son of Vena. All people always behaved well. Being intent upon all religious duties they lived by giving gifts and food. By the grace of that king they thrived with all pleasures.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

The Merit of Listening to or Reciting This Purāṇa

Sūta said :

1-4a. Having well received the order of Vena that very religious prince, Pṛthu, collected all auspicious necessaries (for the sacrifice). Having invited all brāhmaṇas born in various countries, king Vena performed a horse-sacrifice. He gave various

kinds of gifts to brāhmaṇas. The lord of the earth physically went to Viṣṇu's heaven. The religious-minded one eternally lives with Viṣṇu.

4b-12a. I have thus told you the entire account of that king, which terminates all sins and destroys all misery. That religious-minded king Pṛthu ruled the earth. The best king milked the earth with the three worlds. He pleased his subjects with virtuous and religious deeds. I have narrated to you the entire Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The first is the Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa and the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa. I shall again tell you the greatness of Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The sin of the best man who (just) listens to one verse of this Khaṇḍa everyday, perishes. O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the religious merit of him who, the wise one, listens devoutly to a chapter (of this Khaṇḍa). He gets that fruit which is obtained by a gift of a thousand cows to brāhmaṇas on an auspicious parvan-day; and Viṣṇu is pleased with him. A man who everyday reads this Padma Purāṇa, will not meet with difficulties in the Kali Age.

Vyāsa said :

12b-13a. O you lotus-born one, why is it that very terrible dangers do not come to the meritorious man who listens to the Padma Purāṇa?

Brahmā said :

13b-28. That fruit, O dear one, which is said to be the fruit of a horse-sacrifice, is seen in (the recital of or listening to) the Padma Purāṇa. That auspicious sacrifice, viz. the horse-sacrifice does not at all exist in the Kali Age. That which is (the Padma) Purāṇa is indeed equal to the horse-sacrifice. Sinful men sticking on sinful ways do not enjoy that meritorious fruit of the horse-sacrifice which gives salvation. O best brāhmaṇa, in the Kali Age, men do not enjoy the merit of this meritorious Purāṇa called Padma like the merit of the horse-sacrifice. In the Kali Age sinful men have to go to the ocean of hell. Why will they (then) listen to the meritorious (Purāṇa), accomplishing the four goals (of human life). He, who has listened to this Purāṇa called Padma, has acquired the entire means of the four goals (of human life). Therefore, sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice have disappeared in the Kali Age, O highly intelligent one. They have,

with the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and their notes, gone to heaven. Great faith is produced (even) before in a pious man to listen (to the Padma Purāṇa) who, being endowed with goodness, having faith, and devoted to the lord, desires to listen to it with his sons and wife. No great danger would come to a man who listens (to it). But faithlessness is first produced in the reciter and the listener (who are impious). O best brāhmaṇa, even greed is produced in the listener. Great and terrible delusion caused by god Viṣṇu always ruins the listener. Polluters and revilers and sinners are coming up everyday. O Vyāsa, the good-minded one should realise: 'Oh ! A danger appears to have come up to me', (and) he should perform a sacrifice. With great sacred prayers (in honour) of Viṣṇu and hymns (addressed to) Viṣṇu, which give great merit, with the hymn '*Viṣṇorarāṭa* (from the Viṣṇu-sūkta), with the hymn '*Sahasrasīrṣā* (from the Puruṣasūkta), with the good hymn '*Indam Viṣṇu*', with the hymn '*Ā Brahma*', with the hymn sacred to Śiva—he should thus perform a sacrifice. So also with the Bṛhat Sāman hymn and with the hymn of twelve letters (viz. *Oṃ namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*). He should perform the sacrifice with the hymn sacred to the particular deity to whom the sacrifice is offered.

29-35a. He should perform the sacrifice with more than eight sesamum seeds, (ladles of) ghee, and sacred wood-sticks of the palāśa (tree). O brāhmaṇa, he should also instal the (representations of) planets and worship them. There (i.e. in the sacrifice) he should worship (Gaṇeśa) the destroyer of calamities, and Śāradā—the chief goddess. He should also worship Jātaveda, Mahāmāyā Caṇḍikā, and the lord of the soil with sesamum seeds, rice and ghee and with the hymns (in honour) of those (deities). He should perform the sacrifice in this way. He should give presents to brāhmaṇas. He should give a gift along with a cow according to his capacity. Then calamities disappear and the Purāṇa would accomplish perfection. I shall tell you about the calamity of (i.e. which befalls) him who does not do like this : A disease giving great pain is produced in his body; grief due to (the death of) his wife or son takes place; so also his wealth is lost; undoubtedly he suffers from many severe diseases. He in whose house there is no wealth (to be given to brāhmaṇas) should observe a fast.

35b-41a. When Ekādaśī arrives properly, he should worship Viṣṇu with a devout mind in the sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity. According to his wealth he should then feed the brāhmaṇas. Then having offered it with a solemn vow and offerings to Viṣṇu, he should take food with relatives, sons and wife. Then he will attain perfection. Those who are devoted to Dharma should listen to the entire text of the Purāṇa. By (doing) that the four goals (of human life) are accomplished, not otherwise. Listen, O brāhmaṇa; in the Kṛta Age sinless men listened to the Purāṇa called Brahma, which consisted of one lakh and twenty-five thousand verses.

41b-49. When the Tretā Age arrived, men listened to the entire Purāṇa called Pādma, the number of verses in which was half a lakh and two thousand. Enjoying the fruit of the four goals, they would again reach Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, in the Dvāpara Age, the text called Padma is said to have twentytwo thousand verses narrated by Brahmā, the highest soul. In the Kali Age, men, devoted to Viṣṇu, will read the text called Padma, consisting of twelve thousand verses only. In all these four texts there is the same import and there is the same sentiment; the remaining (portion) is simply the expansion of the account. The twelve thousand (verses) will disappear, O best one, and, when Kali Age has arrived, the first (text) will again appear. Having listened to the Bhūmikhaṇḍa, a man is free from all sins, is free from all sorrows and gets rid of all diseases. Giving up all other (activities) like the muttering of the names (of a deity), giving gifts, and (studying) sacred texts, a man should carefully listen to (the Purāṇa) called Padma. The first is Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa, the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa, the third is Svargakhaṇḍa, the fourth Pātāla, the fifth is Uttarakhaṇḍa, destroying all sins.

50. One who devoutly listens to the five Khaṇḍas in the serial order, obtains the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows.

51. O brāhmaṇas, with great luck, the five Khaṇḍas, are obtained (by a man). They are said to give salvation. This is true, (quite) true. There is no doubt about this.

III SVARGAKHAṆḌA

(Section on the Heavens)

CHAPTER ONE

Sūta Romaharṣaṇa Agrees to Narrate Padma Purāṇa

1. Om, salutation to (Gaṇeśa) the remover of obstacles. Salutation to the glorious one. I salute the lotus-like feet of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), which are always saluted by Indirā (i.e. Lakṣmī), which are called 'the best', which are fixed in the hearts of people, and which are the only, absolutely excellent abode of the great people.

2-6. Once all the sages resembling blazing fire, all the sages living on the Himālaya mountain and masters of the Vedas, knowing (events) of (all) the three times (viz. past, present and future), magnanimous ones, resorting to (i.e. doing) many meritorious (acts), those who lived on the Mahendra mountain, the Vindhya mountain, in the Arbuda forest, in the Puṣkara forest, on the Śrīśaila mountain, in Kurukṣetra, in Dharmāraṇya, in Daṇḍakāraṇya, Jambumārga, in Satya(-loka)—these and many other spotless sages came along with their disciples, as they were eager to see Śaunaka.

7-8a. The ascetics, having duly worshipped Śaunaka, and being well-honoured by him, sat, in due order, on beautiful seats meant for holy sages and offered by Śaunaka.

8b-12a. They told one another stories about Kṛṣṇa. At the end of (the narration of) the stories by the sages of pure hearts, there came the very bright, very lustrous Sūta, Vyāsa's disciple, named Romaharṣaṇa, and well-versed in the Purāṇas. He duly saluted them ; they also honoured him. The great, glorious sages, the ascetics, like Śaunaka, asked Romaharṣaṇa, Sūta, Vyāsa's disciple, who was properly and comfortably seated:

The sages said :

12b-15. O very intelligent Romaharṣaṇa of a good vow and well-versed in the legends of the past, formerly we have heard

from you stories from the Purāṇas. Now we, who are delighted, are engaged in (narrating) the story of Viṣṇu, since the devotion to Hari is the greatest Dharma of all men. (Please) narrate (to us) again the Purāṇa connected with the account of Viṣṇu. Any other story about Viṣṇu, O Śuta, is said to be like a crematory. That is a sacred text which in itself remains in the form of Viṣṇu's story.

16-18. Tell us the name of holy places giving merit. Wherefrom has this mobile and immobile world sprung? By whom is it looked after? In which (object) is it dissolved? Which places of pilgrimage are meritorious? Which mountains are venerable? Which rivers are very meritorious, auspicious and remover of the sins of men? O distinguished one, tell us all this in the proper order.

Sūta said:

19-21. Well, well, glorious ones, you have asked well, O ascetics. Having saluted that (Vedavyāsa) I shall narrate to you the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma. I always salute that Vedavyāsa, Parāśara's son, who is the greatest man, who is the only source to be known by all, who is the support of learning, who gives great knowledge, who is to be known by the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, who is always tranquil, who is the object of his own intellect, who is great due to pure lustre, whose glory has spread. My salutation to that revered Vyāsa of unlimited lustre, by whose grace I shall narrate this story about Nārāyaṇa.

22-24. I shall narrate the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma which contains fiftyfive thousand verses and has six khaṇḍas (i.e. sections). There (i.e. in that Purāṇa) the first one is the Ādikhaṇḍa. Then comes the Bhūmikhaṇḍa. After that is Brahmakhaṇḍa. Then follows the Pātāla Khaṇḍa. The next one is known as Kriyākhaṇḍa, and the last one is Uttarakhaṇḍa. This is the great, wonderful lotus, of which the world is full.

25. It is based on the account of that (lotus); therefore the wise call it 'Padma'. This Purāṇa is spotless and excellent, (describing) the greatness of Viṣṇu.

26-31. (It is the Purāṇa) which, formerly, Viṣṇu, the god of gods, narrated to Brahmā, which Brahmā told to Nārada, and

which Nārada narrated to my preceptor. Vyāsa taught me, very dear to him, all the Purāṇas with (treatises on) history, and collections (of verses). I shall narrate to you that Purāṇa, very difficult to obtain, hearing which a man is free from such sins as killing a brāhmaṇa. He who listens to it gets (the merit of) having bathed at all the holy places. It gives salvation just by listening to it with great faith and devotion. Even if a person listens to it without faith and devotion, he gets a heap of merit. Therefore make all efforts to make the Padma Purāṇa the (honourable) guest of your ears (i.e. make all efforts to listen to Padma Purāṇa). In (i.e. from) it I shall narrate the Ādikhaṇḍa which destroys all sins. The sages, who are here, should, along with their disciples, listen to it.

CHAPTER TWO

The Creation of the Elements, Prakṛti etc.

Sūta said :

1. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall first tell you about the first creation, by which the eternal lord, the highest soul, is known.

2-4. O best brāhmaṇas, in the creations there was nothing (left) after the universal destruction. There was only one lustre called Brahman, the cause of everything. It was the ocean of joy, it was pure, and that which those longing for salvation, desire. It was omniscient because it was of the form of knowledge; it was unlimited, immutable. It was indestructible, always very clear, fixed, great and pervasive.

5-16a. At the time of creation that modification of the form of knowledge merged in itself; it began to create. From it came up Pradhāna (also called Prakṛti). From it sprang Mahān. Mahān is of three kinds: Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. As the seed is covered with the skin Mahān is covered with Pradhāna. From the principle of Mahān came up Ahaṁkāra of three kinds : Vaikārika, Taijasa and Bhutādi. As Mahān is covered by Pradhāna, so is Ahaṁkāra covered by Mahān. The Bhūtādi (i.e. Ahaṁkāra)

then produced the subtle element of sound. From that subtle element space having the characteristics of sound was produced. Ahaṁkāra covered the subtle element of sound and (the gross element of) ether. The subtle element of ether similarly produced the subtle element of touch. (Then) very strong Vāyu (air) came up; it is said to be having the characteristics of touch. The subtle element of space covered the subtle element of air. The air, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of colour. Fire is produced from Vāyu; that is called the quality of colour. The subtle element of Vāyu (air) covered the subtle element of colour. Fire, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of taste. Therefrom the subtle element of water came up. The subtle element of taste covered the subtle element of colour. The (subtle element of) water, effecting a change, produced the subtle element of smell. From that this earth, with more qualities than possessed by all (other) elements came up. Since it is an aggregate of that, therefore smell is said to be its quality.

16b-19. They are called subtle and primary elements because they remain (in that condition) in the respective (elements). The subtle elements are devoid of specific perceptible characters. The specific characters are later and are in accordance with the order. These (five) subtle elements are derived from the Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra. O superior sages rich in penance, I have told (you) in brief (about the creation). The ten organs of sense are said to be Taijasa (or Rājasa) and Vaikārika (or Sāttvika). The philosophers have enumerated the mind as the eleventh (organ) here (i.e. in addition to the ten). There are five organs of knowledge and five organs of action.

20-30. O you purifies of your families, I shall enumerate them and their functions. (The organs of knowledge are:) hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell. They become joined with intellect for getting perception like sound. (The organs of action are:) anus, sex organ, hands, feet, and mouth is said to be the fifth. Their functions are said to be : excretion, joy (due to sexual act), grasping, movement and speech (respectively). O brāhmaṇas, ether, air, fire, water and earth are united with successive qualities like sound etc. They have various kinds of strength; remaining separate i.e. without combining themselves,

they were unable to create beings. These beginning with Mahat and ending with specific characters, having all come together, being united with one another, resorting to one another, coming together, having the same target, and having complete union due to the direction of Puruṣa and being favoured by Pradhāna, produce the egg. O very wise ones, that egg always grew like a water-bubble from the elements. It, remaining in the water, grew, having risen from Prakṛti, and an excellent place of Viṣṇu in the form of Brahmā. In it the lord Viṣṇu, the master of the universe, and of an unmanifest form, remained after having taken the form of Brahmā. Of it, of the essence of Mahat, those generated by sweat were the egg, the mountains were the outer skin, and the oceans were the fluid in the womb. Oceans with mountains and islands, the group of the worlds with the luminaries, all (this) along with gods, demons and human beings—was (present) in that egg.

31-34. By the desire of Śrī Viṣṇu that golden egg turned into the lotus which rose from the navel of Viṣṇu having neither beginning nor end. The highest Viṣṇu having the Rajas quality, and taking the form of Brahmā, himself proceeds to create the world; and protects what is created as long as the duration of the kalpa (i.e. the day of Brahmā) lasts; he would annihilate it in the form of Narasiṁha or Rudra. The great soul of the form of Brahmā creates, (then) desires to protect the entire world by taking the form of Rāma etc. Then he became (i.e. becomes) Rudra to swallow it.

CHAPTER THREE

Various Mountains and Regions of the Earth

The sages said:

1-2. O best one, tell us fully the names of the rivers, mountains of the countries, and of those who have resorted to (i.e. are living on) the earth, O you who know the measures, the full measure of the earth, and about the forests also.

Sūta said:

3-10. O very wise one, the gross elements in the universe are five in all; and the wise say that they are equal. (They are:) earth, water, and air, fire and ether. All of them are attended with attributes. Earth is the chief of them. The sages knowing the essential nature (of things) have said that the attributes of earth are sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. O brāhmaṇas, four attributes are (found) in water. It does not have smell. Fire (or light) has three attributes: sound, touch and colour. Air has (two attributes, viz.) sound and touch. Ether has (the attribute of) sound only. O brāhmaṇas, in the five elements these five attributes (are found), and (depending) on them the creatures in all the worlds exist. There is homogeneity when they do not overcome one another; but when they, becoming uneven, enter one another, then the beings spring up (into life) with bodies. This is not otherwise. They are destroyed in order. They come into existence in order (i.e. they are destroyed in the same order as they come into existence). All of them are immeasurable. Their form is the lord (himself).

11-17. Wherever the creatures consisting of the five elements are seen running about, men speak about their measures with (the help of their) reason. One should not, however, (seek to) understand matters that are inconceivable by reason. O best sages, (now) I shall describe to you the island of (i.e. called) Sudarśana. O illustrious ones, this island is circular—has the form of a wheel. It is covered with river waters, and with mountains resembling oceans, also with cities of various sizes and delightful countries; it is full of trees endowed with flowers and fruits; is having grains and (other) wealth. It is surrounded on all sides by the salt ocean. As a man would see his own face in a mirror, in the same way the circular Sudarśana island can be seen (in the ocean). Two of its parts (appear) like a pippala tree and two like a large hare. On all its sides it is surrounded by all (kinds of) herbs. Other than this (portion) all else should be known to be water. I shall describe the rest in brief.

The sages said:

18-20a. O intelligent one, you have briefly and duly given

an exposition of it. You know the essential nature of all things. (Now) O Sūta, tell us (about it) in detail. (First) tell us about dimension of the space which looks like a hare. Then you will describe (the land resembling) the pippala (tree).

Thus asked by them Sūta said (these) words :

Sūta said :

20b-24. O very wise ones, these six jewelled mountains stretching (from) east (to west) have gone into the eastern and western oceans. (They are:) Himavat, Hemakūṭa, the best mountain Niṣadha; so also Nīla abounding in lapis lazuli, Śveta resembling the moon; and the mountain named Śṛṅgavat covered with all (kinds of) metals. O brāhmaṇas, these mountains are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The distance between them measures thousands of yojanas. There are many kingdoms. O best ones, they are called Varṣa. Beings of various species live in them at all places.

25-31a. This is (called) Bhāratavarṣa. Beyond it is Haimavat. The land beyond Hemakūṭa is called Harivarṣa. To the south of Nīla, and to the north of Niṣadha, there is a mountain called Mālyavat stretching from the east. Beyond Mālyavat there is the mountain Gandhamādana. Between the two (i.e. Mālyavat and Gandhamādana) there is the golden mountain Meru globular in shape. It is bright like the (young) morning sun, and like fire without smoke. It is eightyfour thousand yojanas high. O best brāhmaṇas, its depth (also) is eightyfour thousand yojanas. It stands covering the worlds lying above, below and in the horizontal direction. By its side these four islands are situated, O brāhmaṇas: Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla and Jambudvīpa, O best ones; so also Uttarakuru which is resorted to by men who have practised virtuous deeds.

31b-41a. The bird Sumukha, the son of Supārśva, on seeing the big birds of golden colour (on Meru) thought: 'I shall abandon this mountain Meru since the birds there have no difference among them like good, middling and bad ones.' The Sun, the best among the luminaries, constantly goes round it. So also the Moon with the constellations, and Vāyu go round it. O very wise ones, the mountain is endowed with divine flowers, it

is covered with all auspicious golden houses. On that mountain hosts of gods, gandharvas, deities and demons always sport, accompanied by the bevies of celestial nymphs. Brahmā, Śiva and Śakra, the lord of gods gather there, and perform various sacrifices with munificent gifts. (The gandharva) Tumbura, Nārada, (and the two gandharva brothers) Hāhā and Hūhū, having gone there, praise with various hymns the best (of the gods). Well-being to you; the seven high-souled sages and Kaśyapa, the lord of created beings always go there on a parvan-day (i.e. the full-moon day or the new-moon day). On the summit of that mountain only Uśanas or Kavi (i.e. Śukra) is honoured by the demons. It has jewels with gold; so also other jewelled mountains are (parts) of Meru. The lord Kubera gets the fourth part of it. Of that wealth he gives the sixteenth part to human beings.

41b-45a. Adjacent to this mountain is the Karṇikāra grove, which is divine, which is full of flowers of all seasons, which is charming and is elevated with a mass of rocks. There the revered lord Śiva himself, the cause of beings, surrounded by divine beings and accompanied by Umā, and wearing a garland of Karṇikāra flowers reaching his feet, and shining with his three eyes resembling three risen suns, sports. Truthful siddhas, practising severe penance and of good vows (alone can) see him. The great god cannot be seen by those of a wicked conduct.

45b-48. From the peak of the mountain, O best brāhmaṇas, flows, like a stream of milk, the pious, auspicious Ganges, also called Bhāgīrathī, of a universal form, immeasurable, flowing out with a fearful noise, resorted to by the most pious beings, (and falls) with a great speed into the charming lake of Candramas. She has produced that auspicious lake resembling an ocean. The bearer of Pināka (i.e. Śiva) held on his head for a hundred thousand years that Ganges which was incapable of being borne even by the mountains.

49-54. O best brāhmaṇas, Ketumāla is on the western side of Meru; (and) O brāhmaṇas, the country called Jambukhaṇḍa is there only. O best ones, there the span of human life is ten thousand years. The men are of golden complexion and the women resemble celestial nymphs. Human beings there are healthy, free from sorrow and always of cheerful minds. Men born there are of the brightness of heated gold. Kubera, the lord

of guhyakas, surrounded by groups of the celestial nymphs, rejoices with the demons on the peaks of Gandhamādana. By the side of Gandhamādana (there live) other (people) with their sin destroyed. They have a long span of life of eleven thousand years. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are dark in complexion, lustrous and very strong. All the women have the complexion of lotus and are very beautiful.

55-67a. Śveta has blue lotuses; beyond Śveta is the excellent country called Hairaṇyaka. (Beyond that) is Airāvata having several countries, O brāhmaṇas. O glorious ones, there are two countries, of the form of a bow on the south and the north. Ilāvṛtta is in the middle. (Thus) there are five divisions. Of these the succeeding country excels (preceding ones) in attributes like span of life, health, righteousness, desirable objects and material things. (In spite of differences) O best ones, beings in all these countries live together (amicably). O glorious ones, this earth is covered with mountains. The great Hemakūṭa is (also) the mountain called Kailāsa. There god Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubera) rejoices with guhyakas. To the north of Kailāsa and near the Maināka mountain there is the very great, divine mountain called Maṇimaya having golden peaks. By its side there is a large, divine, bright, charming lake called Viṣṇusaras, with golden sands (on its banks), where Bhagīratha, having seen Gaṅgā, (also called) Bhāgīrathī, lived for many years. There are sacrificial pillars decked with gems, and lands full of gold. The very glorious thousand-eyed (god, i.e. Indra) performed sacrifices there, and attained perfection. The eternal creator, of a bright lustre, and the lord of beings, is worshipped there by (beings in) all the worlds. There (reside) Nara, Nārayaṇa, Brahmā, Manu and Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva) as the fifth. The celestial (Gaṅgā) taking three paths, first appeared there after moving from Brahmā's heaven, and flowed in seven streams : Vaṭodakā, Sarasvatī, Pārvatī, Jambūnadī, Sītā, Gaṅgā and Sindhu as the seventh. She is inconceivable, has a divine appellation, and is endowed with prowess.

67b-71a. There, at the end of the yuga (i.e. at the time of creation), a thousand sacrifices are performed (by gods and sages). Sarasvatī (in her course) appears at places and disappears at (other) places. These seven (streams of) Gaṅgā are well-known

in the three worlds. Demons live on Himavat and guhyakas on Hemakūṭa. Serpents and snakes reside in Niṣadha; and Gokarṇa is a penance-grove. The mountain Śveta is said to be (the abode) of gods and demons. Gandharvas always live on Niṣadha, and the brāhmaṇic sages on Nīla. O glorious ones, Śṛṅgavān is (said to be) a place where gods move.

71b-75. O illustrious ones, these are the seven countries according to the division (of the world). Mobile and immobile creatures have encamped here. Prosperity of various kinds—both providential and human—of these (creatures) is seen (there). It cannot be enumerated. The graceful ones are to be believed. O brāhmaṇas, (I have told you) about the divine form of the hare about which you had asked me. I have also told you about the two countries lying adjacent to the country (having the form like that) of a hare in the south and in the north. They are (the hare's) ears. They are Karṇadvīpa and Kāśyapadvīpa. O Brāhmaṇas, the beautiful Malaya mountain has rocks of (as in) Karṇadvīpa. This other country looks like the hare's form.

CHAPTER FOUR

Uttarakuru, Bhadrāśva, Mālyuvat

The sages said:

1. O Sūta, O you very intelligent one, tell us in full (about the countries) to the north, west and east of Meru, so also about the Mālyavat mountain.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇas, on the south of Nīla, and the northern side of Meru there is the auspicious land called Uttarakuru, where siddhas have resided.

3. The trees there have sweet fruits and always have flowers and fruits. The flowers are very fragrant and the fruits are tasty.

4-5. O best brāhmaṇas, some trees there give all the fruits as desired by (one who approaches them). O best brāhmaṇas, there are other trees called kṣīrin (i.e. yielding milk). All they always ooze milk that resembles nectar. They also yield clothes and in their fruits are ornaments.

6. The entire land is full of gems and has fine golden sands, O you ascetics, and there are trees bearing no fruit (but) pleasant to touch in all seasons.

7. Men that are born there have dropped from the world of gods. They are born in pure, noble families, and are very handsome.

8-11. There twins (of opposite sexes) are born and women resemble the celestial nymphs (in beauty). They (i.e. the men and women) drink the nectar-like milk of those milk-yielding trees. The twins that are born there grow equally during the (proper) period. Both have similar beauty, virtues and dresses also. They are fit for one another like the cakravāka birds, O brāhmaṇas. Those people are healthy and always of a cheerful mind. O glorious one, they live for ten thousand and ten hundred years, and do not desert each other.

12. Birds called Bhāruḍa, having sharp beaks and great strength, carry them away when dead and throw them into valleys.

13. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you in brief (the country called) Uttarakuru. I shall now duly describe to you the eastern side of Meru.

14. O ascetics, in the country called Bhadrāśva which is the chief (country), there is a grove (called) Bhadraśāla, where there are huge trees called kālāmra.

15-18. O glorious ones, the kālāmra trees always bear flowers and fruits and are auspicious. They are a yojana tall and are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there are white (in complexion), bright and very strong. The women have the complexion of lotuses, are beautiful and pleasant to look at. They have complexion like that of the moon, have four (principal) colours and their faces are like the full moon. Their bodies are cool like the moon and they areskilled in dancing and singing. O best brāhmaṇas, the span of life there is ten thousand years. They who drink the juice of kālāmra, always remain young.

19-21a. On the south of Nīla, on the north of Niṣadha there is a huge, ancient, Jambu tree. It is auspicious, and grants all desired objects. It is resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The ancient country Jambudvīpa is so called after its name. (The height of the jambu tree) is a thousand and a hundred yojanas, O best brāhmaṇas.

21b-26. Similarly on the eastern peak of Mālyavat there are small mountains. O brāhmaṇas, Mālyavat measures fifty thousand yojanas. Men born there resemble gold (in their complexion). All of them have fallen from Brahmā's heaven and all expound the Vedas. They practise divine penance and live in perpetual celibacy. They enter the sun for protecting the beings. Sixty thousand and sixty hundred of them surround the sun, and go before Aruṇa. Being heated with the sun's heat for sixty thousand years they (ultimately) enter the moon's orb.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ramaṇaka, Hiraṇmaya, Airāvata

The sages said:

1. O best one, tell us duly the names of countries and mountains, so also (about) those that live on those mountains.

Sūta said:

2-4. On the south of Śveta and on the north of Niṣadha there is the country named Ramaṇaka. The men there are born in pure noble families, and all of them are handsome; and all the men that are born there are without enemies. O glorious ones, they being always cheerful, live for eleven thousand and five hundred years.

5-6a. On the south of Nīla and on the north of Niṣadha there is a country called Hiraṇmaya, where there is the river Hairaṇvatī, where, O very wise ones, lives this best bird, the king of birds (i.e. Garuḍa).

6b-8a. The brāhmaṇas there follow (i.e. perform) sacrifices, and the archers are handsome. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are very strong and always have cheerful hearts. O you great ascetics, they live for a span of twelve thousand and five hundred years.

8b-11a. O best brāhmaṇas, the mountain has only three sacred summits. One of them is full of jewels; (another) one, golden and wonderful; (still another) one is full of all gems and looks beautiful with mansions. There the respectable self-luminous lady Śaṇḍinī always lives. O best brāhmaṇas, beyond the Śṛṅgavat mountain, and on its north and near the ocean is the country called Airāvata.

11b-14a. The sun has no scope there; men do not decay. (Only) the moon with the stars covers it like a light. The men there are born with the splendour of lotuses, with the complexion of lotuses and with eyes resembling lotus-petals, and with the fragrance of lotuses. They are unfallen, of agreeable fragrance (possessed by their bodies); they do not eat food and have their senses controlled. O brāhmaṇas, all of them have fallen from the world of gods, and are without any blemish.

14b-15a. O best brāhmaṇas, those most religious men live a span of life of thirteen thousand years.

15b-19. So also to the north of the milky ocean lives the lord, Vaikuṇṭha, Viṣṇu, in a golden car. The car has eight wheels, has (celestial) beings on it and has the speed of mind. It has a colour like fire, is very effulgent, and is decorated with gold. O best brāhmaṇas, he is the lord of all creatures. He is the withdrawl and the expansion, so also he fashions and gets fashioned (i.e. he is the cause of the destruction and creation of) the earth, water, ether, air and fire. He is the sacrifice for all creatures and fire is his mouth.

CHAPTER SIX

Bhāratavarṣa : *Its Rivers and Regions*

The sages said:

1. Tell us about the auspicious Bhārata country which endows merit, (since) you are intelligent in our opinion.

Sūta said:

2-6. I shall now describe to you the excellent country Bhārata of the god dear to his friends, of Manu the son of Vivasvān, of Pṛthu, of the wise Vainya; also of the high-souled Ikṣvāku, of Yayāti, Ambarīṣa, Māndhātṛ and Nahuṣa; also of Mucakunda, Kuberośīnara, Ṛṣabha; also of Aila, and king Nṛga; of Kuśika, of the royal sage Gādhi the magnanimous one, also of Soma, and of the royal sage Dilīpa; also, O glorious ones, of other powerful kṣatriyas and is dear to all beings.

7-8a. Now I shall describe the country as I learnt about it, O brāhmaṇas. These seven are principal mountains; Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, and also Ṛkṣavān; so also Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

8b-9a. O brāhmaṇas, there are thousands of (other) mountains near them. They are not (so well)-known, (but) possess excellences and have many variegated peaks.

9b-27a. Other smaller mountains are known (to exsit) and they are inhabited by low tribes. Aryans and Mlecchas and many men of mixed (blood) drink (the water of) the pure rivers Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī; also (of) Godāvarī, Narmadā having profuse water, (of) the great river Śatadru, Candrabhāgā, (of) the great river Yamunā, (of) Dṛṣadvatī, Vitastā, and Vipāpā of pure sands; also (of) the river Vetravatī, Kṛṣṇaveṇī, (of) Irāvatī, Vitastā, Payoṣṇī and Devikā; also (of) Vedasmṛti, Vedasīrā, Tridivā, Sindhulākṛmi, Karīṣiṇī, Citravahā, and (of) the river Trisenā, also Gomatī, Dhūtapāpā, and (of) the great river Candanā, Kauśikī, the charming Tridivā, Nācitā, Rohitāraṇī, Rahasyā, Śatakumbhā, and Śarayū also, O best of brāhmaṇas; similarly (of) Carmaṇvatī, Vetravatī, Hastisomā, Diś; Śarāvatī, Payoṣṇī, Bhīmā; also Bhīmarathī, Kāverī, Culukā, and Ahitāpī, and also Śatamalā; and Nīvārā, Mahitā, also (of)

the river Suprayogā, Pavitrā, Kṛṣṇalā, Sindhu, Vājinī and Puramālinī, Pūrvābhirāmā, Vīrā and Bhīmā, also Mālāvatī, Palāśinī, Pāpaharā, Mahendrā, Paṭalāvatī, Kariṣiṇī, Masiknī, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrī, Marutā, Pravarā, Menā, Hemā; also Ghṛtavatī, Anāvatī, Anuṣṇā, and Savyā, O best brāhmaṇas; and Sadāvirā, Adhṛṣyā, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrā, Rathacitrā, Jyotirathā, Viśvāmitrā and Kapiñjalā, Candrāvahaphalī, and (of) the river Kucīrā, Vainadī, Piṅgalā, and (of) the great river Tuṅgavegā, Vidiśā, Kṛṣnaveṇā, and Tāmrā and Kapilā also; Dhenu, Sakāmā, Vedasvā, Havisrāvā, and Mahāpathā; also (of) Śiprā, Picchalā, and the river Bhāradvājī, Kaurṇikī, the river Śoṇā, Bāhudā and Candramā; Durgā, Antaḥśilā, and Brahmamedhyā and Dṛṣadvatī, Parokṣā and Rohī; also Jambūnadī; Sunāsā, Tamasā, Dāsī, Sāmānyā, Varaṇā, Asī, Nīlā, and Dhṛtikarī, and the great river Parṇāśā, Mānavī, Vṛṣabhā, Bhāsā, Brahmamedhya, Dṛṣadvatī.

27b-30. These and others are the many great rivers, O best brāhmaṇas. (Aryans and Mlecchas drink the water of) the always pure Kṛṣṇā, Mandagā, Mandavāhinī, Brāhmaṇī, Mahāgaurī, and Durgā also, O best ones; (and of) Citrotpalā, Citrarathā, Atulā and Rohiṇī; Mandākinī, Vaitaraṇī, and the great river Kokā, Śuktimatī, Anaṅgā, also Vṛṣasāhvayā; Lohityā, Karatoyā, also Vṛṣakātvayā; Kumārī and Ṛṣitulyā, and Mārīṣā and Sarasvatī; Mandākinī, Supuṇyā, and Sarvā, Gaṅgā, O best ones.

31-33a. All these are the mothers of the (whole) world. Like these there are hundreds and thousands of renowned rivers. O brāhmaṇas, I have thus described (to you) the rivers as I remembered them.

33b-65. Hereafter listen to the description of the countries when I am giving it. Among them are Kurupāñcāla, Śalva, Mādreya, Jāṅgala, Śūrasena, Pulinda, Baudha, and Māla also; Matsya, Kuśila, Saugandhya, Kutsapa, Kāśi-kośala; Cedi, Matsya, Karuṣa, Bhoja, Sindhu and Pulindaka, and Uttama, Daśārṇa, Mekala with Utkala, Pañcāla, Kośala, Nikapṛṣṭha, Yugandhara, Bodha, Madra, Kaliṅga, Kāśā, Parakāśa, Jaṭhara and Kukura, also Daśārṇa, O extremely good ones; Kunti, Avanti, also Aparakunti, Gomanta, Mallaka, Puṇḍra, Vidarbha and Nṛpavāhika; the (South) and North Aśmaka, and the

smaller Goparāṣṭra, Adhirājya, Kuśaṭṭa, Mallarāṣṭra and Kerala ; Mālava, Upavāsya, Cakra, Vakra, Ālaya and Śaka; Videha, Magadha, Sadma, Malaja and also Vijaya; Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga and in the same way Yakṛllomāna; Malla, Sudeṣṇā, Prahlāda, Mahiṣa and also Śaśaka; Bālhika, Vāṭadhāna, Ābhīra, Kālatoyaka, Aparānta, Parānta and Paṅkala and Carmacaṇḍika, Aṭavīśekhara, and Merubhūta, O best ones; Upāvṛta, Anupāvṛta, Suraṣṭra and also Kekaya; Kuṭṭa, Aparānta, Māheya, Kakṣa, Samudra, Niṣkuṭa; O brāhmaṇas, Andha and the many hilly tribes, also the tribes residing in the mountains, Aṅga, Malada, Magadha, Mālava, Arghaṭa, Sattvatara, Prāvṛṣeya, and Bhārgava, O best brāhmaṇas; Puṇḍra, Bhārga, Kirāta and Sudeṣṇa and Bhāsura; Śaka, Niṣāda, Niṣadha, also Anārta and Nairṭa; Pūrṇala, Pūtimatsya, Kuntala and also Kuśaka ; Tarigraha, Śūrasena, Ījika, Kalpa and Kāraṇa ; Tilabhāga, Masāra, Madhumatta, Kakundaka, Kāśmīra, Sindhu, Sauvīra, Gāndhāra, and Darśaka ; Abhisāra, Kudruta, Saurila and Bālhīka, Darvī and Mālava, Darva, Vātaja and Amarathoraga; also, O brāhmaṇas, Balaraṭṭa, Sudāman, Sumallika, Bandha, Karīṣa and also Kulinda and Gandhika, Vanayu, Daśa, Pārśvaroman, Kuśabindu; Kāccha, Gopālakaccha, Jāṅgala, Kuruvarṇaka; Kirāta, Barbara, Siddha, Vaideha, Tāmraliptika, Auḍra, Mleccha with Sairindra, Pārvatīya (mountaineers), O best ones. O best sages, and other countries are on the south : Draviḍa, Kerala, Prācya, Mūṣika and Bālamūṣika; Karṇāṭaka, Māhiṣaka, Vikandha and Mūṣika also; Jhallika, Kuntala, also Sauhṛda, Anala and Kānana; also Kaukkuṭaka, Bola, Kokaṇa, Maṇivālaka; Samaṅga, Kanaka and Kuṅkura, Aṅgāra and Māriṣa; Dhvajinyutsavasaṁketa, Trivarga and Mālyaseni; Vyūḍhaka, Koraka, Proṣṭa, Saṅgavegadhara also; also Vindhya, Rulika, Pulinda with Balvala; Mālava, Malara also, and also Aparavartaka; Kulinda, Kālada, also Candaka and Kuraṭa; Muśala, Tanavāla, Satīrtha, Pūtisṛñjaya; Anidāya, Śivāṭa, and also Tapana and Sūtapa; and Ṛṣika and Vidarbha, Taṅgana and Aparataṅgaka; O best sages, the others at the north are Mlecchas; the Yavanas with Kāmbojas are terrible Mleccha tribes; Śakṛghṛhas, Kulaṭyas Hūṇas with Pārasikas, also Ramaṇas and others (like) Daśamālikas are other tribes. There are kṣatriya colonies and also the

families of vaiśyas and śūdras. (There are the tribes called) Śūra, Ābhīra, Darada, Kāśmīra with Paśu; also Khāṇḍīka, Tuṣāra, Padmaga, Girigahvara, Ādreya with Bharadvāja, also Stanapoṣaka; Droṣaka, Kaliṅga, and Kirāta tribes, (those) killing with javelins and Karabhañjaka. These and others are the countries which are on the eastern and northern sides; O brāhmaṇas, I described them by way of an illustration; so (I explained) the great fruit, according to their virtue and power, the three goals (of human life).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Span of Life in the Four Yugas

The sages said:

1-2. Tell us, in detail, of the measure (i.e. span) of life, strength, the auspicious and inauspicious, the future, past and present (of the residents) of Bhāratavarṣa, Himavat, and also Harivarṣa.

Sūta said:

3-8. There are four yugas in Bhāratavarṣa. The first yuga was Kṛta; then there was Tretāyuga, O brāhmaṇas. After that Dvāpara sets in; then comes Kali. The span of life, O best sages, was known to be four thousand years, in Kṛtayuga. O ascetics, similarly they know that the span of life in Tretāyuga is three thousand years. The span of life at present in Dvāpara is two thousand years; for that much period men live on the earth. However, in Tiṣya (i.e. Kali)-yuga, men die while in womb, and also they die as soon as they are born.

9-11. In Kṛtayuga, O brāhmaṇas, very strong, very powerful men, having the attribute of wisdom were born and begotten in hundreds and thousands. O brāhmaṇas, strong and handsome brāhmaṇas were born and begotten in Kṛtayuga. Ascetics with penance as their treasure were born and begotten endowed with great perseverence, high souls, pious and truthful

in speech. The kṣatriyas also are born handsome, able-bodied, of great valour, skilled in archery and brave in battles, and esteemed by the brave. In Tretāyuga, all the kṣatriyas were emperors.

12-15. In Dvāparayuga, however, all the castes were always born with great energy, power and desire to kill one another. Men born in Kaliyuga will possess little lustre, are said to be wrathful, greedy, untruthful. Human beings in Kaliyuga will have jealousy, pride, and also anger, deceit and malice, O brāhmaṇas; in the middle yuga, Dvāpara, a small portion remains. In qualities, Himavat is superior (to Bhāratavarṣa) and Harivarṣa is superior to that.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Śākadvīpa: Mountains, Rivers and Countries

The sages said:

1-3a. O best one, you have duly described (to us) Jambukhaṇḍa. Tell us correctly the extent of its dimensions. You who see the whole, tell us properly about the extent of the ocean, as well as about Śākadvīpa and the sacred Kuśadvīpa: also tell us properly about Śālmala and about Krauñca-dvīpa.

Sūta said:

3b-6. O brāhmaṇas, there are many islands which have covered the earth. I shall describe the seven islands: Listen, O best brāhmaṇas. The measure of the mountain Jambu is full eighteen thousand and six hundred yojanas. The extent of the salt sea is said to be double this. It is crowded with many countries, and is beautified with gems and corals. It is also adorned with mountains variegated with many minerals. Crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas, the ocean is circular in form.

7-10. O best ones, I shall now duly describe Śākadvīpa. O pious ones, today listen properly when I am describing it. O

best brāhmaṇas, it is twice the size of Jambudvīpa. O glorious ones, best sages, the milky ocean too which surrounds it is like that with its divisions. The communities there are righteous, and the men there never die. Then whence can there be dearth? The men there are endowed with the lustre of forgiveness. O best sages, I have duly told you this brief description of Śākadvīpa. O glorious ones, what else should I tell you?

The sages said:

11. O you righteous one, you have duly given us a brief description of Śākadvīpa. O very intelligent one, now describe it correctly and in detail.

Sūta said :

12-13a. Like that here also, O brāhmaṇas, there are seven mountains. They are jewelled mountains. Also there are oceans, rivers. I shall (now) tell their names; O righteous ones, you are asking about a very useful thing.

13b-18. The first mountain having gods, sages and gandharvas (as its residents) is called Meru. O glorious ones, (the other) mountain stretching towards the east is Malaya. From it clouds proceed in all directions and there they are generated. O sages, beyond it the large mountain is Jaladhāra. From it Indra always takes excellent water. O best brāhmaṇas, from that rain is produced in the rainy season. (Then there is) the high mountain Raivataka, where (i.e. over which) the constellation Revatī is eternally fixed in the firmament. The grandsire himself has made this arrangement. O best brāhmaṇas, on the north is the great mountain called Śyāma. It has the brightness of new clouds; it is high; is rich and has a bright body; due to it the people there are dark (yet) cheerful.

The sages said:

19. O Sūta, a great doubt has come to us (i. e. arisen in our mind): How have they entirely become dark?

Sūta said:

20-39. O very wise, best sages, in all the islands (men of) dark and fair complexion may be found; but since dark comp-

lexion (among people) prevailed, it is called Śyāma (i. e. dark) mountain. O best sages, next to this there is a large mountain Durgaśaila. Then there is the mountain Keśarin, from which breezes (fragrant) with saffron blow. The measure of (each of) them is twice (that of the one mentioned before). O best brāhmaṇas, the wise have said that there are seven countries in them (i.e. in the island). That of the great Meru is Mahākāśa; that of the giver of water (i.e. Malaya) is Kumudottara; O very wise ones, the country of Jaladhāra is known as Sukumāra; (the country) of Raivataka is (called) Kaumāra; and of Śyāma is (called) Maṇikāñcana. O best brāhmaṇas, in the centre of the island there is a great tree called Śāka having height and breadth which can be measured with that in the Jambudvīpa. Beings always go to it. The countries in it are holy, and Śiva is worshipped there. Siddhas, cāraṇas and deities go there. All the subjects there are pious; and the four castes, free from jealousy are engaged in their own duties. A thief is never seen there. The people there, O very wise ones, have a long life and, being free from old age and death, grow like rivers during the rainy season. The rivers there have holy water and the Ganges flows there in many streams. O brāhmaṇas, they are Sukumārī, Kumārī, Sītā, and Śitodakā, also Mahānadī, similarly the river Maṇijalā, and the river called Ikṣuvardhanikā, O best sages. From there proceed rivers having holy water and very beautiful, in hundreds of thousands, from where Indra showers. It is not possible (for me) to remember and recount their names. (All) these excellent rivers are holy. Then there are four holy countries well-known in the world: Mṛga, Maśaka Mānasa and Mallaka. Mṛga is mostly populated with brāhmaṇas who are engaged in their duties. In Maśaka live kṣatriyas who are pious and grant the desires (of supplicants). O glorious ones, in Mānasa live vaiśyas acting according to the rules of their caste. With all their desires satisfied, they are brave and settled in the ways of virtue and material gains. In Mallaka live śūdras, and (these) men behave righteously. O best brāhmaṇas, there is no king, no punishment, nor those who inflict punishment. Those men, knowing what is right, protect one another. This much only can be said about that island.

CHAPTER NINE

Śālmalika, Krauñca, Kuśa and Puṣkara Dvīpas and Their Mountains

Sūta said:

1. O illustrious ones, now listen to the account of the northern islands from me who am telling it.

2. There is an ocean having the water of clarified butter; another has the water of curds; then there is an ocean having the water of wine; and one more is an ocean of milk.

3. O best brāhmaṇas, these islands have double the size of one another (as they proceed northwards). O highly intelligent ones, there are also mountains surrounded by oceans.

4-6. In the middle island there is a large mountain (made of) minerals. In the western island there is the mountain Kṛṣṇa, that is the friend (i.e. favourite) of Nārāyaṇa, O brāhmaṇas. There Viṣṇu himself guards divine gems; and there, being pleased, he bestows happiness on creatures. In the centre of the country in the Śaradvīpa there is a clump of Kuśa (grass); O brāhmaṇas, the Śālmali (tree) is worshipped in the Śālmalika island.

7-9a. O best brāhmaṇas, on the Krauñca island is the Mahākrauñca mountain, which is a mine of heaps of gems. It is always adored by all the four castes. O brāhmaṇas, then there is the Gomanta mountain full of all minerals, where the glorious, lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) always lives. The lord Nārāyaṇa, (also called) Hari is always in the company of those who have secured salvation.

9b-11. O best brāhmaṇas, in Kuśadvīpa is the mountain Sunāma (literally, of a good name) which is full of corals and is inaccessible. Another mountain, the golden mountain, is Dyutimān, O best of brāhmaṇas. The third is Kumuda mountain. The fourth mountain is called Puṣpavān, the fifth one is Kuśeśaya. The sixth is Harigiri. These six are the chief mountains.

12-14a. The distance between each of them becomes double (as we proceed from one to another). The first country is Audbhida; the second in Reṇumaṇḍala; the third one is Suratha, and the fourth one is known as Lambana. The fifth country is

Dhṛtimat, and the sixth country is Prabhākara. The seventh country is Kapila. These seven are in a straight line.

14b-16. O brāhmaṇas, in these gods and gandharvas and (other) creatures are cheerful and sport and enjoy. No man dies in these (divisions). O brāhmaṇas, there are no thieves there, nor the Mleccha tribes. O best ones, the people there are almost white and delicate. O best brāhmaṇas, O very wise ones, I shall describe as I have heard about the remaining islands.

17-20a. O illustrious ones, in Krauñcadvīpa, there is a large mountain called Krauñca. Next to Krauñca is the (mountain) Vāmanaka; next to Vāmana (or Vāmanaka) is Andhakāraka; next to Andhakāra (or Andhakāraka) is the best mountain Maināka, O brāhmaṇas. Next to Maināka, O brāhmaṇas, is the best mountain Govinda. Beyond Govinda is the great mountain Puṇḍarīka. Next to Puṇḍarīka is said to be the (mountain called) Dundubhisvana. Towards the east the distance between any two of the mountains becomes double.

20b-24a. I shall tell you about the countries there. Listen to me who am describing them. The country of Krauñca (i.e. in which Krauñca is situated) is Kuśala; that of Vāmana is Manonuga; O ascetics, the country beyond Manonuga is Uṣṇa. Beyond Uṣṇa is Prāvaraka. Andhakāraka is next to Prāvara. Munideśa is said to be next to Adhakāraka country. Dundubhisvana is said to be next to Munideśa. It is crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there have almost a white complexion. These regions are said to be resorted to by gods and gandharvas.

24b-32a. In (the island of) Puṣkara there is a mountain called Puṣkara which is rich in gems and jewels. The lord of beings himself moves there. All gods and great sages always wait upon him. O best brāhmaṇas, they worship him with agreeable words. Various gems proceed uninterruptedly from Jambudvīpa. O best sages, due to celibacy, truthfulness and restraint of the brāhmaṇas the span of life and the quality of health of the people in those islands go on doubling (as one goes) on (towards the north). O best ones, I have described to you the countries in which only one religion exists. The lord, the creator himself, having raised the rod of punishment always protects these islands. O brāhmaṇas, he is the king, he is the final beatitude, he is the father and the grandfather. O best

brāhmaṇas, he protects the creatures along with the brāhmaṇas and the wise. O glorious ones, the beings here daily eat the food that is ready and that itself approaches them.

32b-41. Beyond that a region called Samā (Or, beyond that a great mountain, the habitation of people) is seen. It is symmetrical and is round on all sides. O best brāhmaṇas, the four quarter-elephants, dear to the world and with their cheeks and mouths in rut, live there. O best sages, O brāhmaṇas, (they are:) Vāmana, Airāvata, Añjana and Supratīka. I do not venture to count their measure. The proportion—breadthwise, lengthwise and heightwise—is ever incalculable. There winds blow irregularly from all directions. O best sages, the elephants take them. They draw them with the very lustrous trunks resembling lotuses. Then they always again quickly let them out in a hundred ways. O best brāhmaṇas, the winds (thus) let out by the breathing elephants come (down), and the creatures live (by them). I have described to you the world along with its creation as desired (by you). O best brāhmaṇas having heard this measure of the earth, which gives merit and is agreeable, a rich person gets emancipated, has his objects accomplished, and is liked by the good. His span of life, strength, glory and lustre increase. The (fore-)fathers and grandfathers of him, who, having taken a vow, listens to this when narrated on a parvan-day, are pleased.

CHAPTER TEN

Dialogue between Nārada and Yudhiṣṭhira

The sages said:

1-2. Having heard the measure and the position of the earth, so also (having heard) about the rivers from you, we have just drunk nectar. We have heard that there are holy places on the earth. Describe them to us and also how they are fruitful. O very wise one, we desire to hear about them in detail from you.

Sūṭa said:

3-4. O you ascetics, you have asked about an excellent, meritorious, great account. I shall narrate it to the best of my knowledge, suitably and as I have heard it. I shall tell you the ancient conversation of the celestial sage Nārada with Yudhiṣṭhira. O best brāhmaṇas, listen.

5. The Pāṇḍavas, the sons of Pāṇdu, the illustrious great heroes, deprived of their kingdom, lived in the forest with Draupadī.

6. They saw the high-souled celestial sage Nārada, shining with brāhmaṇic lustre, and bright like blazing fire (who had come) there.

7. That celebrated descendant of Kuru, surrounded by those brothers (of him), shone with glowing splendour as Indra surrounded by gods in heaven.

8. As Sāvitrī did not abandon the gods, or as the sun's light does not leave Meru, Yājñasenī (i.e. Draupadī) did not, due to her piety, forsake the sons of Pṛthā (i.e. of Kuntī, i.e. the Pāṇḍavas).

9-10. That revered sage Nārada, having accepted the homage, consoled that son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhṣṭhira) with proper, well-formed and agreeable (words), and spoke to the noble Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira: "O best among those who practise piety, what do you desire? What should I give you?"

11-14. Then king (Yudhiṣṭhira), the son of Dharma, having along with his brothers saluted Nārada, and with the palms of his hands joined, spoke to Nārada, resembling a god: "O you illustrious one, when you, revered by all the worlds, are pleased, then I think, (everything) is affected through your grace, O you of a good vow. O best sage, O sinless one, if you (are going to) favour me with my brothers, then (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) tell (us) fully about the fruit that he who, devoted to the holy places, goes round (over) the earth, gets."

Nārada said:

15-18. O king, listen attentively as to how formerly Dilīpa heard all this from Vasiṣṭha. In ancient times the best and very

lustrous king Dilīpa took up a religious vow and lived like a sage, O great king, at the auspicious, holy place Gaṅgādvāra on the bank of the Ganges resorted to by gods and gandharvas. He, of a great lustre, pleased (by offering oblations) his dead ancestors and gods. He also satisfied (by offering oblations) the sages with religious rites.

19-25. When the large-minded one was muttering (the names of a god) for some time, he saw the best sage Vasiṣṭha, resembling Śiva. When he saw that priest (of him) shining with glory, he was very much delighted and amazed. That best one among the righteous ones, took, according to the religious rites, the materials of worship on his head, and being pure and with his mind controlled, told his name to that best brāhmaṇic sage: "Well-being to you, I am Dilīpa, I am your servant, O you of a good vow. Just by seeing you I have become free from all sins." O great king Yudhiṣṭhira, that Dilīpa, controlled in speech, and best among men, speaking thus, folded the palms of his hands, and remained silent. Seeing that Dilīpa, the best king, emaciated due to his vow and muttering to himself, the sage was pleased.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Puṣkara, the Holiest of Holy Places

Vasiṣṭha said:

1. O you knowing what is right, O you illustrious one, I am fully pleased with you due to this your civility, restraint and truthfulness.

2. You who have such piety have emancipated your forefathers. Therefore, O son, you (are able to) see me; and O descendant of Manu, you are fit to be a sacrificer.

3. My affection for you increases; tell me today what I should do for you. O you sinless and best among men, I shall give you what you will ask for.

Dilīpa said:

4-7. O you who know the essence of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, O you who are adored by all the worlds, I (think my desire) is satisfied in that I have seen you the lord. O best among the pious ones, if I deserve to be favoured by you then I shall ask you about a doubt (lurking) in my mind. Please remove it. I desire, O revered sir, to hear (your explanation) about the doubt that I have about the piety of each of the holy places. You should tell me separately (about each holy place). O best brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇic sage, O you abode of penance, tell me what fruit he, who goes round the earth, obtains.

Vasiṣṭha said:

8-12. I shall tell you who are devoted to me among the sages. O dear one, listen with a concentrated mind, the fruit (that one) gets by (visiting) holy places. He whose hands, feet and mind are well-restrained, and has learning, penance, and glory gets the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. He who keeps himself away from accepting (things from others), is contented, controlled and pure, and free from pride, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. He who is sinless, who goes without food, does not accept food, has his senses controlled, and who is free from all blemishes obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. O lord of kings, he, who never gets angry, who is given to truthfulness, who is of a firm vow, who looks upon (other) beings like himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place.

13-15. The sages have prescribed (certain) sacrifices even among (i.e. for) gods in due order. They have correctly and fully told about their fruit. O king, those sacrifices are not within the reach of the poor; (since) sacrifices require many implements and extensive preparations. They are within the reach of kings, or sometimes of rich people. They cannot (be performed) by groups of poor people independently (since they have) no means.

16-19. O king, listen to the rite which is within the reach even of poor people and which resembles (i.e. gives) the pious fruits of sacrifices. O best among the righteous, this, i.e. visiting the holy places, is pious and is the great secret of the sages,

and is superior even to (performing) sacrifices. A man, who visits a holy place without fasting for three nights, without giving gold and cows (to a brāhmaṇa) is born poor. A man does not obtain that fruit by performing sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma, where large gifts are given, which he obtains by a visit to a holy place.

20-35. A man would become like a god by reaching Puṣkara tīrtha which is a well-known holy place of the heaven, that (has come) to the earth and that is well-known. O king, there are ten thousand crores of holy places, which live by Puṣkara at all the three times of the day, O you descendant of the solar dynasty. O lord, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhyas with hosts of Maruts, also gandharvas and celestial nymphs are present there. There, O great king, gods, demons and brāhmaṇic sages have practised penance and have secured divine contact due to great religious merit, O brāhmaṇas, and got what they desired. O wise ones, the Puṣkaras purify all the sins. They are valued in heaven. O glorious one, the grandsire, very much pleased and liked by gods and demons always lived at this holy place. O illustrious one, gods with sages going before them, have attained great accomplishment, and become endowed with great religious merit. The wise say that he who, engaged in honouring his forefathers and gods, bathes there, gets merit which is tenfold of (i.e. got by performing) a horse-sacrifice. If, while resorting to the Puṣkara forest he feeds just one brāhmaṇa, he thereby goes to honoured people living in Brahmā's abode. O king, he who, with the palms of his hands joined, remembers Puṣkaras in the morning and evening, has bathed (i.e. has acquired the merit of having bathed) in all the holy places. All that sin of a woman or a man, (committed) from birth perishes by just going to Puṣkara. O king, as Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is said to be the first among all the gods, similarly Puṣkara is said to be the first of the holy places. He, who, being restrained and pure, has lived at Puṣkara for twelve years, obtains (the fruit of) all sacrifices and goes to Brahmā's heaven. One who would practise (the vow of performing) Agnihotra for a hundred years, or would just live on one full moon day of Kārtika at Puṣkara, would have the same (merit). It is difficult to go to Puṣkara; it is difficult (to practise) penance at Puṣkara; it is difficult to give gifts at Puṣkara; it is

difficult to stay at Puṣkara. The three peaks are bright, and also the three streams, and the holy places like Puṣkara; we do not know the reason for that. One, being restrained, and controlled in food, having lived (i.e. who lives) for twelve years at Puṣkara, becomes free from all sins and would get the fruit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Visit to Some Holy Places and Its Merit

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-8. Turning round and moving to the right, he would approach the way to Jambu. Approaching the path of Jambu, adored by manes, gods and sages, he obtains (the fruit of) Aśvamedha and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man going (from there) after having stayed there for five or six nights, does not meet with ill luck, but obtains best success. Returning from Jambumārga, he should go to Dulikāśrama. He does not meet with indigence and is honoured in heaven. O king, he who engaged in worshipping the forefathers and gods observes a fast for three nights after reaching the hermitage of Agastya, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. By subsisting on vegetables or fruits he obtains the fruit of youthfulness; after reaching Kanyāśrama nourished with glory and revered by people, he is free from his sins the moment he enters it, since, O king, it is a meritorious and the best sacred grove. Being controlled and having limited food, he, after having worshipped his forefathers and deities, gets the fruit of a sacrifice full of (i.e. that satisfies) all desires. Having turned to the right, he would then go to Yayātipatana.

9-11. There he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Being restrained and having controlled his diet, from here he should go to Mahākāla. After having bathed in Koṭitīrtha he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Then, O you righteous one, he should go to the holy place, the abode of the lord of Umā (i.e.

Pārvatī). It is known as Bhadravaṭa, and is well known in the three worlds. Having approached Śiva there he would obtain the fruit of (a present of) a thousand cows.

12-13. O best man, by Mahādeva's (i.e. Śiva's) grace he would obtain the leadership which is fruitful and without a rival. Having reached Narmadā, well-known in the three worlds, and having offered oblations to his forefathers and gods (there) he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Greatness of Narmadā

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. O Nārada, I desire to hear again about the best, well-known holy place called Narmadā, that rends the mountains of sins, which Vasiṣṭha described to Dilīpa. (O Nārada,) describe it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, also (tell me about) the greatness of Narmadā as described by Vasiṣṭha. O Nārada, tell me how this very pious river, known as Narmadā, is famous everywhere.

Nārada said:

4-5. Narmadā is the best of rivers; she destroys all sins; she would liberate all beings—immobile and mobile. I have heard the greatness of Narmadā as told by Visiṣṭha. O great king, know (i.e. listen to) it; I (shall) tell you the whole (of it).

6-14. Gaṅgā is holy at Kanakhala; Sarasvatī at Kurukṣetra; (but) Narmadā is holy everywhere—whether in a village or a forest. The water of Sarasvatī purifies (a man) within three days; that of Yamunā within seven days; that of Gaṅgā instantly; but that of Narmadā just by looking at it. In the western part of Kaliṅga country on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain Narmadā is beautiful, charming and holy in the three worlds. O great king, the sages, with penance as their wealth, having practised penance here, along with gods, demons and gandharvas, have attained great prosperity. O great king, a man, following a vow and with

his senses controlled, having bathed there and having fasted for a night would liberate a hundred families. If a man, after having bathed at Janeśvara duly offered a ball of rice (to his dead ancestors), they remain pleased till the universal destruction. All around the mountain is settled Rudrakoṭi. There is no doubt that the entire Rudrakoṭi would be pleased with him who bathes there with sandal, flowers and unctions. At the western end of the mountain the great lord himself (resides). Being chaste and controlling his senses, a man should bathe there, be purified and should perform the rite (in honour) of the dead ancestors as enjoined in the sacred texts.

15-20a. There only he should gratify his divine manes with water with sesamum seeds. O Pāṇḍava, his family upto the seventh descendant stays in heaven. Crowded by the host of celestial nymphs, surrounded by celestial women, smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and adorned with divine ornaments, he is honoured in the heaven for sixty thousand years. Then having fallen from heaven, he is born in a large family. He is born rich, disposed to making presents and righteous. He again remembers that holy place, (and) again goes to (i.e. visits) it. Having liberated a hundred (members of) his family, he goes to Rudra's heaven. The best river is said (to be flowing over) a hundred yojanas in her later (course). O best king, her breadth is two yojanas.

20b-22. Round the mountain Amarakaṇṭaka there are sixty crores and sixty thousand holy places. Being chaste and pure, having conquered his anger and senses, and turned away from all (kinds of) harm, and engaged in the well-being of all creatures, thus being full of good conduct, he should go round the deities.

23-25a. O king, listen attentively to the fruit of his religious merit. O Pāṇḍava, he would live for a hundred thousand years in heaven crowded with the hosts of celestial nymphs and waited upon by celestial women. Smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and decorated with divine ornaments, he sports in the world of gods and rejoices with deities.

25b-28a. Then the powerful one, having fallen from heaven, becomes a king. He obtains a house decorated with many gems, with pillars decked with gems, divine diamonds and lapis lazuli.

It has divine paintings, endowed with male and female servants; and its gate is disturbed (i.e. is noisy) with the trumpetings of elephants and neighings of horses, as is the gate of Indra's house.

28b-34a. He, the lord of great kings, glorious and dear to all women, having lived in the house, having sports and enjoyments, would live for a hundred years without (suffering from) any disease. He who dies, or enters fire or water or fasts at Amarakaṇṭaka, would have such enjoyments. His course has no return, as is that of a mountain into the sky. When the man has a fall, he becomes the lord of men. In each of his houses thousand of maidens and women wait (upon him), and wait for his directions. Born with divine enjoyments he sports for eternal time. Like the man on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain, none else is born on the earth upto the ocean, O best of men.

34b-44. To the west of the mountain the holy place (that exists) should be known as Koṭitīrtha. There is Rudra known as Kāleśvara, well-known in the worlds. By offering balls (of rice) to him and by offering the Sandhyā-prayers, the manes become satisfied for ten years. To the south of Narmadā, there is a great river Kapilā. She is covered with sarala and arjuna trees. She is not far away. She is very holy, auspicious and is known in the three worlds. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there is a full (group of) a hundred crores of holy places. O king, it is so reported in the Purāṇas. All this has a crorefold merit. The trees on her bank that fall due to lapse of time, get the best course due to being connected with her water. The other one, O glorious one, is holy and removes poignant pain. A man, by bathing there on her bank becomes free from poignant pain in a moment. All hosts of gods with kinnaras and great serpents, yakṣas, demons, gandharvas and sages rich in penance have all gathered there on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain. All those and the sages also resorted to Narmadā, (and) the holy (river) named Viśalyā that destroys all sins was produced by them. O king, a man, being chaste, and with his senses controlled, who, after fasting for a night, bathes there, would liberate a hundred (members of) his family.

45-49. O best king, Viśalyā is said to be reddish and is (thus) declared in the Purāṇas by the lord with a desire for the good of the worlds. O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O lord of men, he

who observes a fast at that holy place, goes, with all his sins purified, to Indra's heaven. O lord of kings, I have heard in (i.e. learnt from) the Purāṇa that a man bathing anywhere in Narmadā obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Those who live on the northern bank, stay in Indra's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, as Śaṅkara (himself) told me, the gifts (given at the bank of) and bath taken in Sarasvatī, Gaṅgā and Narmadā are equal in fruit.

50-54. He, who casts his life on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain, is honoured for a full hundred crores of years in Indra's heaven. The water in (i.e. of) Narmadā is holy and is adorned with foam and ripples. It is pure, worth adoration. (A man bathing there) is free from all sins. Narmadā is all-holy; she removes the sin due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa; by fasting (on her bank) for a day and night a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Thus, O son of Pāṇḍu, Narmadā is pleasing and holy. This great river purifies (all) in the three worlds at the very holy Vaṭeśvara and in the penance grove of Gaṅgādvāra. At all these places those that are afflicted and have fulfilled their vows (are liberated). At the confluence of Narmadā the merit is said to be tenfold.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sages Pray to God Śiva for Protection from Demon Bāṇa

Nārada said:

1. The greatest river Narmadā, that is holy and most auspistrands is divided into three (streams) by the glorious sages, longing for piety.

2. O Pāṇḍava, the (three) divisions are just like (the three strands of) a sacred thread. O lord of kings, a man bathing in (any of) them is free from all sins.

3. O son of Pāṇḍu, listen to me who am telling you about the origin of the sacred place Jaleśvara which is well-known in the three worlds.

4-5. Formerly all hosts of sages and all the groups of Maruts with Indra praised that magnanimous Maheśvara, the god of gods. Praising him, they reached (the place) where god Maheśvara stayed. The hosts of Maruts with Indra prayed to him: "O Virūpākṣa, we are distressed with fear. O lord, protect us."

The lord said:

6-7. O best sages, welcome to you. For what purpose have you come here ? What is (the cause of) your grief ? What is (the cause of) your tormentation ? Wherefrom has fear come (to you) ? O glorious ones, tell (it); I desire to know it.

Thus addressed by Rudra, they, of unlimited vows, told him:

The sages said:

8-11. There is a terrible, very powerful demon, proud of his strength, well-known by the name Bāṇa, whose divine city (called) Tripura, remaining in the sky moves by his lustre. O Virūpākṣa, we are afraid of him; we have sought your refuge only. Protect us from this great distress; you are our great shelter. O lord of gods, please do this favour to all (gods) so that gods, being very much pleased, (would) live happily, O Śaṅkara. O lord, do that by which they will be extremely happy.

The god (i.e. Śiva) said:

12. I shall do all this. Do not be dejected. In a very short time I shall do what makes you happy.

13-14. Having comforted all of them, and remaining on the bank of Narmadā, the lord of gods thought over (the way) to kill him, O Pāṇḍava. 'How, in what manner, should I kill Tripura ?' Thinking like this he remembered Nārada at that time. Just due to his remembering (Nārada), Nārada came to him.

Nārada said:

15. O Mahādeva, order me for what purpose I was remembered (by you). O god, tell me what mission I have to carry out.

The lord said:

16-18a. O Nārada, go there where the city Tripura of Bāṇa, the lord of Dānavas, stands. Go quickly and do that. The husbands are like deities and the wives are like celestial nymphs. Due to their lustre, O Brāhmaṇa, Tripura moves in the sky. Going there, O lord of brāhmaṇas, give them a different advice.

18b-19a. Hearing the words of the lord, the sage of quick steps entered the city to alienate the hearts of the women (from their husbands).

19b-22. The celestial city adorned with gems of many kinds, shone. It was a hundred yojanas broad, and was doubly long. There only he saw Bāṇa, who was proud of his strength, who was adorned with garlands, ear-rings, armlets and a crown, who was covered with necklaces and gems, and who was decorated with silver. His wives were rich with gems and men were adorned with (ornaments of) gold. The very mighty lord of the demons got up on seeing Nārada.

Bāṇa said:

23-24. The celestial sage himself has come to my house. O best brāhmaṇa, materials of worship and water for washing feet must properly be given. He has come after a long time. O brāhmaṇa, rest (on) this seat.

He thus honoured Nārada who had come there. His wife, the chief queen named Anaupamyā (spoke):

Anaupamyā said:

25. O revered sir, in the human world, by which vow or religious observance or gift or penance are gods pleased ?

Nārada said:

26-34. He who gives a cow made of sesamum to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas, has (indeed) given the earth of nine islands along with the oceans. For an eternal period he enjoys with aeroplanes resembling crores of suns and satisfying all desires and rules for a very long time. There are various kinds of trees : hog-plum, wood-apple, grove of plantain

trees; so also kadamba, campaka and aśoka. (So also there are the days like) the eighth, fourth, twelfth and both the Saṃkrānti day and Viṣuva day and the beginning of a day—all these are auspicious. Those women who fast (on these days), having acquired merit, undoubtedly live in heaven. The ascetic women, free from the Kali-age, free from all sins, and engaged in fasting, do not move (in the mundane existence). O you beautiful lady, having heard like this, do as you desire.

Hearing the words of Nārada, the queen said (these) words: "O best brāhmaṇa, show favour to me. Accept the grifts as desired (by you). (I shall give you) gold, gems, jewels, garments and ornaments. O brāhmaṇa, I shall also give you what is difficult (for you) to obtain. (Please) accept it, O best brāhmaṇa; may Viṣṇu and Śiva be pleased."

Nārada said:

35-37. O lady, give (it) to someone else—to a poor brāhmaṇa. I am endowed with a good character and have devotion.

O best of Bharatas, having thus taken away their hearts, and having advised all of them, he went (back) to his own place. With their hearts drawn away and therefore with their hearts gone elsewhere, a flaw came about in the city of that magnanimous Bāṇa.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Greatness of Amarakaṇṭaka

Nārada said:

1-7a. O son of Kuntī, listen to (me telling you) and understand what you ask me about. In the meanwhile Rudra remained on the bank of Narmadā. The place is called Hareśvara, and is well-known in the three worlds. At that place Mahādeva, thinking about Tripura's murder, (stayed,) making Mandara the

bow, making Vāsuki the bow-string, standing with his feet a span apart, making Viṣṇu the best arrow, putting fire in the fore ; Vāyu was put at the mouth ; (making) the four Vedas the horses, (he made) the chariot full of all gods. The two gods, Aśvins, were on the wheels ; the disc-holder himself was the axle ; Indra himself was at the end of the bow; Vaiśravaṇa remained on the arrow. Yama was on the right hand and the terrible Kāla on the left. Gandharvas, well-known in the worlds, were placed on the radius of the wheels. Of this best chariot Prajāpati Brahmā was the charioteer.

7b-9. The lord of gods, making a chariot like this full of all gods, remaining stable, waited there for a thousand years. When the three cities, moving in the sky, came together, he pierced them with an arrow. Rudra, at that time, discharged an arrow towards Tripura.

10-11a Women lost their lusture, and their strength decayed. Thousands of portents appeared in the city. To destroy Tripura he took up the form of Kāla (i. e. god of death).

11b-14a. Similarly wooden figures laughed loudly. The paintings closed and opened their eyes. (The citizens) saw themselves decorated with (i. e. clad in) red garments in a dream. They also saw unusual things foreboding calamity. People that were at that place (i.e. in the city) saw these portents. Their strength and their intellect were destroyed by Śiva's anger.

14b-24. A great (i.e. strong) wind, greatest among winds, and resembling the one at the end of a yuga and called Saṁvartaka was discharged and it troubled their heads. The trees there burnt, and summits fell down. Everything was disturbed and there were lamentations, and loss of consciousness. All the gardens were shattered and were quickly burning. With blazing flames he (i.e. Fire) burnt it all. Trees, parks, houses of various kinds (were burnt). The blazing fire spread into the ten directions. Then stones were hurled into each of the ten directions. The very fierce flames of the fires were burning in thousands. The entire city that was burning looked like kiṁśuka (a tree with red blossoms). The (columns of) smoke could not go from one house to another. The Tripura city, burnt by Śiva's anger, crying, very unhappy and blazing was burning in all directions. The tops of the palaces were shattered in thousands. Many palaces vari-

gated with many gems and beautiful houses were burnt in various ways by the blazing fire. (The flames) destroyed the groves of trees and places of worship as well. In all temples they blazed and burnt. (People) touched (i.e. burnt) by fire sank into despondency and lamented in various tones. There the heaps of charcoal appeared like mountain-peaks.

25-26a. They praised the god of gods: 'O lord, protect me.' The demons, who, harassed by fire, had embraced one another were burnt there in hundreds and thousands.

26b-27. The gardens in the city were parched by fire, and the large lakes crowded with swans and ducks, and with lotus plants and lotuses were being burnt. They, extending up to hundreds of yojanas, were covered with fresh lotuses.

28. Palaces, decorated with gems and resembling mountain-peaks (in height), fell down, being completely burnt by fire, like waterless clouds.

29-31. The fire impelled by Śiva's anger cruelly burnt young and old along with women, birds and horses. Many men that had slept (alone, or) had slept with their wives, or in a close embrace with their sons, were burnt by the enemy of Tripura. In that city blazing with fire women resembling celestial nymphs, being struck by the flames of fire, fell on the ground.

32-34. A young woman of broad eyes and adorned with a necklace, who was blinded by smoke, and afflicted by flames, awoke; and thinking about her son, she fell on the ground. Some (other woman), having golden complexion, adorned with sapphires, blinded by smoke, fell down on the ground. Another friend (of her) who had held her hand, was burnt with children.

35-38. Due to this another female of a celestial form was seen to be perplexed by insanity. Joining the palms of her hands and putting them on her head, she requested Fire: "If you desire (i.e. harbour) enmity towards men who have harmed you, why do you offend women—the cuckoos in the cage in the form of the house? O sinner, O cruel one, O shameless one, what makes you angry with females? You do not possess chivalry, you do not have a feeling of shame, you are without purity; rich in beauty and complexion of various kinds, they are available. Tell us: Have you not heard in the world that women are not to be killed?

39-45. But these have become virtues for you—oppressing women, O Fire, and not having compassion, sympathy or courtesy towards them. O Fire, even Mlecchas are kind to women, when they see them. You are worse than Mlecchas, you are irresistible and senseless. O Fire, these are your virtues (leading you) to destroy. O you wicked one, why do you drop (yourself) on these women? O wicked Fire, O cruel and shameless one, O you unfortunate one, O you hopeless one, O you cruel one, you (that are) wicked are burning children." In this way they lamented and talked in many voices. Others, bewildered due to the grief for their (dead) children, were angry, and cried. The cruel and angry Fire burnt (everything) like an enemy. There were flames in the lakes, water, and in wells also. (The women cried:) "O Mleccha, by burning us, what condition will you reduce us to ?" When they were crying like this, Fire said (these) words:

Vaiśvānara said :

46-62. I am not destroying on my own. I only do what is ordered, and am not the one who can favour. Overcome with anger, I am here moving by chance.

Then that very lustrous Bāṇa seeing Tripura ablaze, and remaining on his seat, said to the god: "I am destroyed by gods. The weak and wicked ones (mis) informed the god. Without investigating properly, I am burnt by magnanimous Śiva. Except Maheśvara no other enemy is (able) to strike me." Taking the Phallus (called) Tribhuvaneśvara on his head, he got up. Leaving his friends, very beautiful gems, women of various kinds, and taking the Phallus on his head kept in the city, he praised Śiva, the god of gods, the lord of three worlds. "O Hara, if I have been tormented by you, you deserve to be killed. O Mahādeva, let my Phallus (i.e. which I am worshipping) not perish due to your grace. O Mahādeva, I have always worshipped it with great devotion. Even if I am to be killed by you, may my Phallus not perish. O Mahādeva, let me seize your feet. O Mahādeva, existence after existence, I am devoted to your feet." He (then) worshipped the highest god with the Toṭaka metre : "Om, Śiva, Śaṅkara, my salutation to Sarvakāra (i.e. who brings about everything). My salutation to Śiva, O Bhava, O Bhīma, O

Maheśa. O you destroyer of the body of Madana (i.e. Cupid), O you destroyer of Tripura, O you who crushed Andhaka, O you dear to women, O you who destroyed Kāma (i.e. Cupid), my salutations to you who are saluted by the hosts of gods and siddhas, and by (your) attendants having the faces of horse, monkey, lion, lord of elephants and having very short and very long faces. You were not vexed by the demons difficult to be found out; (on the contrary) you were saluted by many of them. O revered lord, you who like great devotion, O you stable one, O you who hold the digit of the moon (i.e. the crescent moon on your head), O god, I salute you. O Jaya, always give me hosts of sons and wives and wealth. With many, hundreds of bodies, I am tormented. You have today put me on the path of a great (i.e. fearful) hell. My sinful course is not turning away; he abandons me, pure due to pure deeds; (but) he takes pity on me; the direction is revolving; this delusion is rambling; he keeps off bad intentions." To him who, being controlled and of a pure mind, would recite this divine Toṭaka, Rudra would grant boons as he gave to Bāṇa. Hearing this very divine hymn lord Maheśvara was himself pleased with him at that time.

The lord said :

63-64a. O child, you should not be afraid. O demon, with your sons, grandsons, wives, and servants, remain in a golden (mansion). O Bāṇa, from today you will not be killed (i.e. will be immune from death) even by gods.

64b-66. O Pāṇḍava, the god of gods, again granted him a boon. Being fearless, indestructible and immutable he moved in the world. Then Rudra withdrew the seven-crested one, i.e., Fire. Magnanimous Śiva protected his third (city). By virtue of Rudra's lustre it always moves in the sky.

67-71a. Thus, Tripura burnt by the magnanimous Śiva fell on the ground blazing with rows of flames. He knocked down one on Śrīśaila near Tripura. He knocked the other one on Amarakaṇṭaka mountain. When Tripura was burnt, O king, Rudrakoṭi stood firm. The burning one was caused to fall there. Therefore, he is known as Jvāleśvara. His divine flame, going

upwards, went to heaven. There was then great lamentation among gods, demons and kinnaras. Rudra arrested that arrow in the best Maheśvara city.

71b-79a. O son of Pāṇḍu, he who, like this, would go to the mountain Amarakaṇṭaka, having well enjoyed the fourteen worlds for a thousand and thirty crore years and then having reached the earth, becomes a righteous king. There is no doubt that he enjoys as a sovereign emperor on the earth. O great king, this Amarakaṇṭaka is holy on all sides. The wise say that he who would go to Amarakaṇṭaka at the time of a lunar or solar eclipse, has tenfold (the merit) of a horse sacrifice. Seeing Maheśvara there, he obtains heaven. When the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu they will come together. That is the great merit of (performing) the Puṇḍarīka sacrifice. On Amarakaṇṭaka lives Jvāleśvara. Bathing there, men go to heaven. Those that die there, are not reborn. O great king, listen to the fruit which one gets by casting one's life at the lunar or solar eclipse at Jvāleśvara.

79b-82. Gods called Amara stay on Amarakaṇṭaka. (One who bathes) in the water on the slope of (Amarakaṇṭaka-) god Amareśvara, obtains (i.e. lives in) Rudra's heaven till deluge. Crores of gods, of good vows practise penance there. O king, the holy place Amarakaṇṭaka extends upto a yojana on all sides. A man, entertaining or not entertaining desire, having bathed in the holy water of Amarakaṇṭaka, would be freed from sins, and he goes to Rudra's worlds.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Kāverī Saṁgama Tīrtha

The sage said :

1-3. All those magnanimous multitudes of people with Yudhiṣṭhira as the chief, and the sages, the abodes of penance, asked Nārada: "O revered one, tell us for the good of the people and for our prosperity, the great truth about the confluence of Kāverī, that wicked men who are always engaged in sinful acti-

vities, become free from all sins and go to the highest place (on bathing there). We desire to know this. O revered one, please tell it."

Nārada said :

4-7. O you all led by Yudhiṣṭhira, listen together : Having performed a great sacrifice here, Kubera of truthful valour, became more than a sovereign emperor after reaching this place. O great king, he attained perfection. Listen to me who am telling it. Kubera, the lord of yakṣas and of truthful valour, having bathed at the place where Kāverī joins Narmadā well-known in the world, practised penance for a hundred divine years. Mahādeva, pleased with him, granted him an excellent boon : "O yakṣa, O you of a great energy, speak about the boon that you desire. Tell me freely about your wish, or whatever is in your mind."

Kubera said :

8. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, grant me the boon (by which) I would be the first lord of the yakṣas.

9. Hearing the words of Kubera, god Maheśvara was pleased. Saying, 'Let it be so', he disappeared there only.

10. That yakṣa too, who had obtained the boon, quickly went to the abode of yakṣas. He was honoured by all the lordly yakṣas, and was consecrated as the king.

11. Those men, who do not know that the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) destroys all sins, are undoubtedly deceived.

12-17a. Therefore a man should make every effort to bathe there. Kāverī is very holy, and Narmadā is a great river. O best king, one should bathe there and worship Śiva. Having received the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in the world of Rudra. As Śaṅkara has told me, he who enters fire or observes a fast (at the confluence of Kāverī and Narmadā) is not reborn. Being waited upon by excellent women, he enjoys in heaven like Rudra for sixty thousand and sixty crore years. Remaining in Rudra's heaven he enjoys wherever he goes. Fallen due to the

exhaustion of his religious merit, he becomes a righteous, prosperous, religious, great king, born in a (noble) family.

17b-19. Having properly drunk water there, a man would obtain the fruit of the (vow called) Cāndrāyaṇa. Those men who drink the holy water (at the confluence), go to heaven. Men get the same fruit as they obtain (by bathing) in Gaṅgā and Yamunā by bathing at the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā). O lord of kings, the place of the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) is holy, gives great fruit and destroys all sins.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Narmadā and the Holy Places on Her Northern Bank

Nārada said :

1-2. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is an extensive holy place. It is known as Patreśvara, and is great and removes all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man rejoices with deities. Taking any form he likes, he sports for five thousand years.

3. Then a man should go to Garjana where Megha is present. By the power of that holy place, it has attained the name Indrajit.

4. Then he should go to (the holy place) Megharāva where there is the thundering of clouds. There the group Meghanāda has become prosperous due to boons.

5. Then O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place) known as Brahmāvarta. O Yudhiṣṭhira, Brahmā is always present there.

6-7a. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Then, being restrained, and controlled in diet, (he should go to) the holy place Aṅgāreśvara. Being absolved of all sins, he goes to Rudra's world.

7b-8a. Then, O lord, he should go to the excellent Kapilātīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of having given away a cow.

8b-9a. Then he should go to Kāñcītīrtha resorted to by the hosts of gods and sages. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e. go to) the heaven of cows.

9b-10a. O lord of kings, then he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kuṇḍaleśvara. Near there, Rudra lives with Umā.

10b. O lord of kings, one who bathes there, cannot be killed even by gods.

11. Then he should go to Pippaleśvara, which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven.

12. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the pure Vimaleśvara. There is the beautiful Devaśikhā, put down by the god.

13-17. Casting my life there I would obtain (i.e. go to) Rudra's heaven. Then a man should go to Puṣkariṇī, and should bathe there. By just bathing there he would obtain half of Indra's seat. Narmadā is the greatest among the rivers. She has flowed forth from Rudra's body. She would liberate all immobile and mobile beings. The magnanimous lord, the god superior to all other gods, told (this) to the groups of sages, and especially to us. This excellent river Narmadā was praised by sages with a desire for the well-being of the worlds. She came out of Rudra's body. She always removes all sins. She is saluted by all creatures.

18-20a. She is also extolled by gods, gandharvas and celestial nymphs: "Salutation to you, O (river) of holy water, O you going to the ocean. Salutation to you who was taken out by the sages from Śiva's body. Salutation to you who are chosen by Dharma, O you of an excellent face; salutation to you, O you who are saluted by the host of sages. Salutation to you who purify the pure; salutation to you who are well-worshipped by the entire world."

20b-22. He, who, with a pure mind daily recites this hymn, if a brāhmaṇa, obtains (mastery over) the Vedas; if a kṣatriya, would be victorious; if a vaiśya, would be profited; if a śūdra, would get a good position. One who desires food, would always have it just by remembering her. God Maheśvara himself always resorts to Narmadā. Therefore the river should be looked upon as holy and remover of sins.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

More Tīrthas on the Bank of Narmadā

Nārada said :

1-7. Since then Brahmā and others, as well as the sages rich in penance, being free from lust and anger, resort to Narmadā, O king. Seeing the trident of the lord fallen at that place on the earth, the magnanimous Śiva narrated its importance. It came to be known as the great, most meritorious holy place Śūlabheda. He, who, having bathed there, would worship the god (Śiva), would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, he, who would pass three nights there, and would worship Mahādeva, would not be reborn. Then a man should go to Maheśvara, (then) to the excellent Narmadeśvara. (Then he should visit) the very meritorious Ādityeśvara. Then on worshipping Mallikeśvara with ghee and honey, he obtains the fruit of his existence. Then he should see (i.e. visit) Varuṇeśvara, the excellent Nirajeśvara. He gets the fruit of (visiting) all the holy places by seeing (i.e. visiting) these five. O lord of kings, he should go to the place where the battle was fought.

8-11. Koṭitīrtha is well-known where the demons were fought (with), and where these demons, proud of their strength, were destroyed. Seizing their heads he killed them who had gathered there. They installed (the representation of) Maheśvara with the trident in his hand. The point was placed there, therefore (the place) is known as Koṭitīrtha. By seeing that holy place, a man would physically go to heaven. At that time, due to meanness, Indra restrained (a man) by means of the wedge of his bolt. Since then, people's going to heaven has been checked.

12-13. O Pāṇḍava, after having offered a coconut with ghee, at the end (of this rite), by all means he should, holding a lamp on his head, go round the (representation of the) god. He gets all his desires satisfied. When he dies, he obtains Rudrahood, and is not born again in this world. Having gone to heaven, then having ruled as a king, he goes to Indra's paradise.

14-18. Similarly, having waited upon Mahādeva, a man who just bathes there gets the fruit of all sacrifices. Then, O lord of kings, a man should go to the very beautiful holy place—the ex-

cellent Agastyeśvara—that removes the sins of men. O king, a man, having bathed there, is absolved (of the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa. A man with his senses controlled remaining in profound meditation, should bathe the representation of the god with ghee (on) the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika. He, with twentyone members (i.e. descendants) of his family, would never be deprived of lordly position. He should present cows, shoes, an umbrella, and a blanket, and also food to all brāhmaṇas. It would have a crorefold merit.

19-21. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the excellent Ravistava. Having bathed (i.e. if a man bathes) there, he would get a throne (i.e. would be a king). On the right bank of Narmadā, the place holy to Indra (and called Śakratīrtha) is well-known. Having fasted there for a night, he should bathe. Having bathed there he should properly worship Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He goes to Viṣṇu's world.

22-23. Thence he should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, which removes all the sins of men. A man, by just bathing there, is honoured in Śiva's world. There only is the very beautiful holy place of (i.e. named after) Nārada. By just bathing there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

24-25. Then he should go to Devatīrtha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Brahmā's world. Then he should go to Amarakaṇṭaka, formerly established by gods. Having just bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of having given away a thousand cows.

26-27. Then he should go to Vāmaneśvara. Seeing Vāmanaka there, he is absolved of the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa. Thence a man should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, and certainly to Īśāneśa. Then having gone to (i.e. if he visits) Vaṭeśvara, he obtains the fruit of his existence.

28-29. Thence a man should go to Bhīmeśvara, which destroys all diseases. A man, O king, by just bathing there is free from all misery. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Varaṇeśvara. Having bathed there, a man is free from all misery, O king.

30-31. Then he should go to Somatīrtha and should see Candra. O king, then, being full of great devotion, having bath-

ed there, he, obtaining a celestial body just at that moment, enjoys like Śiva for a long time. He is honoured for sixty thousand years in Śiva's heaven.

32-36. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place of) Piṅgaleśvara. By fasting for a day and night (there) he would obtain the fruit of (having fasted for) three nights. O lord of kings, he who gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa) at that holy place, is honoured in Rudra's world for as many thousand years as there are hairs on his body and on the bodies of the members born in his family. O king, he who casts his life there, enjoys eternally as long as the moon and the sun will remain in the sky. Those men who, having resorted to the bank of Narmadā, die (there), go to heaven as the men of good deeds go.

37-41. Then on the day of Gaṅgāvataraṇa, he should go to Surabhikeśvara and (the holy place called) Nāraka and Koṭikeśvara. He is blessed; no doubt about it. Thence going to Nanditīrtha, he should bathe there. Lord of Nandi (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and the man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then he should go to Dīpeśvara, and the penance-grove (called) Vyāsatīrtha. Formerly the great river turned back from there, being afraid of Vyāsa. Then, when he uttered the sound 'hum', she went (i.e. flowed) towards the south. O king, he who circumambulates at the holy place, has Vyāsa pleased with him, and he gets the desired fruit. He who puts a thread round (the representation of) the god along with the altar, sports for eternal time; and he is as Rudra is (i.e. becomes Rudra-like).

42-47. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent sacred place (called) Eraṇḍī. Having bathed (there) at the confluence, he is absolved of all sins. Eraṇḍī is well-known in the three worlds (as) destroyer of sins. Or (on) the eighth of the bright fortnight in the month of Āśvina, a man having bathed, and being pure and intent upon fasting, should feed one brāhmaṇa, (thereby) a crore (of brāhmaṇas) are fed. Having bathed at the confluence at Eraṇḍī, and delighted in devotion, a man, having placed a pearl-oyster on his head, and having plunged into the water mixed with that of Narmadā, gets absolved of all sins. O king, he who would circumambulate at that holy place, goes round the earth consisting of seven islands.

48-51. Then having bathed at Suvarṇatilaka and having given gold (to a brāhmaṇa) he is honoured in Rudra's world with a golden mansion. Then fallen from heaven after (some) time, he becomes a powerful king. Thence, O lord, he should go to the confluence of the river Ikṣu. It is well-known in the three worlds. Śiva is present there. O king, having bathed a man would attain the status of the head of the attendants of Śiva. Thence he should go to Skandatīrtha which destroys all sins. Sin committed from birth goes away merely by bathing there.

52-57a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Āṅgirasa, and should bathe there. He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He is honoured in Rudra's heaven. From there he should go to Lāṅgalatīrtha which destroys all sins. Having gone there, O lord of kings, he should bathe there. There is no doubt that (thereby) he becomes free from sins committed during seven existences. Hence he should go to Vaṭeśvara, the best of all holy places. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. From there, he should go to the great (holy place called) Saṅgameśvara which removes all sins. Having bathed there one gets a kingdom. There is no doubt about it. All that (merit) of the man who, after reaching Bhadratīrtha, gives gifts, would become a crorefold in effect by the power of that sacred place.

57b-58a. If a woman bathes there, she would become like Gaurī, and undoubtedly goes to Indra.

58b-62. Then he should go to Aṅgāreśvara, and should bathe there. A man, merely by bathing there, is honoured in Rudra's world. On the Aṅgārakī caturthī (i.e. caturthī falling on a Tuesday) he should bathe there. Being instructed by Viṣṇu, he rejoices eternally. Having bathed at Ayonisaṅgama, he should see the Yonimandira. Having gone to Pāṇḍaveśvara, he should bathe there. He cannot be killed by gods or demons, and rejoices eternally. Then going to Viṣṇu's heaven, he is full of sport and enjoyments. Having enjoyed great pleasures there, he is born as a king in the mortal world.

63. He should go to Kambotikeśvara and should bathe there. When the summer solstice arrives, whatever he would desire would take place.

64. Thence he should go to Candrabhāgā and bathe there. A man by just bathing there is honoured in Soma's world.

65-69a. Then, O king of kings, he should go to the holy place of Śakra (i.e. Indra), which is well-known, and is honoured by the king of gods. He should give gold as a gift. Or he who would give a bull of a dark colour, would live in Hara's city for as many thousand years as there are hairs on the body of the bull, and on the bodies of those that are born in his family. Then having fallen from heaven, he becomes a powerful king; and by the power of that holy place, he becomes, among thousands of mortals, the master of horses of white colour.

69b-74. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Brahmāvarta. Having bathed there, he should offer oblations to his divine manes by giving a piṇḍa according to the proper rites after having fasted for a night. When the Sun has entered Virgo, (this merit) would be stored eternally. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kapilātīrtha. O king, he, who, after bathing there, gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa), would get the fruit which would be got by giving the entire earth. Narmadeśvara is a great holy place. There has not been or will not be (other) holy place (like this). O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. (A man who has gone there) is born as a sovereign emperor on the earth; he is perfect with all (good) characteristics and free from all diseases.

75-80. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is a very auspicious holy place (called) Ādityāyana; it is charming and is created by the lord. O lord of kings, the gift given there after having bathed there becomes inexhaustible by the power of that holy place. Those that are poor, or diseased, or those that have done wicked deeds, are absolved of all sins, and go to the Sun's world. On the seventh of the bright fortnight when the month of Māgha has come, he who, without food, and with his senses controlled, would live in the temple, never suffers from diseases, does not become blind or deaf. Being fortunate and endowed with handsomeness, he becomes dear to women. This holy place is said to be very holy by Mārkaṇḍeya. O lord of kings, those who do not go there are undoubtedly deceived.

81-85a. Thence he should go to Māseśvara, and should

bathe there. A man merely by bathing there, would obtain heaven. Remaining in all worlds, he rejoices as long as fourteen Indras rule. Then remaining in the penance-grove called Nāgeśvara which is nearby, and having bathed there, O lord of kings, and being pure and concentrated, he sports for eternal time with many Nāga damsels. He should go to Kubera's abode, where Kubera stays. Kāleśvara is a great holy place where Kubera was pleased. Bathing there, O lord of kings, he would obtain all wealth.

85b-88. Then he should go westward to the best abode of the Maruts. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, being pure and concentrated, the intelligent one should then give gold and food according to his capacity. He goes to Vāyu's world by the Puṣpaka aeroplane. O Yudhiṣṭhira, then in the month of Māgha he should go to my Tīrtha. On the fourteenth day of a dark fortnight he should bathe there. Then he should eat at night, and should not go to Yonisaṁkaṭa.

89-97a. Thence he should go to Ahalyātīrtha. After merely having bathed there, he rejoices with celestial nymphs. Ahalyā got liberated after having practised penance at the Parameśvara (tīrtha). When the thirteenth day of the bright half of Caitra has arrived, he should, on that day holy to god Cupid, worship Ahalyā. A man who is born anywhere (i.e. in any family), would be dear there. He would be dear to women, would be prosperous and like another god of love. Having reached Ayodhyā, (he should visit) the well-known Śakratīrtha. Having merely bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows. Thence he should go to Somatīrtha and just bathe there. A man who has just bathed there, is absolved of all sins. On (the day of) the planet Moon, O lord of kings, it would remove all sins. O king, Somatīrtha is well-known in the three worlds, and gives a great fruit. O lord of men, he, who observes there the Cāndrāyaṇa vow, goes, after his soul is purified from all sins, to Soma's heaven. He who dies at Somatīrtha by entering fire or in the water or by living without food, is not born in the mortal world.

97b-100. Thence he should go to Stambhatīrtha, and should bathe there. By merely bathing there, a man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excel-

lent Viṣṇutīrtha. The excellent Viṣṇutīrtha is (also) well-known as Yodhanīpura. Vāsudeva fought with crores of demons there. There a holy place came up; and here (i.e. at this holy place) Viṣṇu would be pleased. By observing a fast day and night, he keeps off (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

101-104a. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Tāpaseśvara. It is known as Amohaka. There he should offer oblations to his manes. On the full moon or the new moon day he should offer a śrāddha according to the proper rite. Having bathed there, O king, he should offer piṇḍa to his manes. In it stand stones of the form of elephants. At that (holy place) he should offer piṇḍa—especially in (the month of) Vaiśākha. His manes remain pleased as long as the earth will remain.

104b-121. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Siddheśvara. Going there he should go near Gaṇapati. From there, he should go to the place where there is Janārdana (as a) liṅga. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. On the right bank of Narmadā there is a very auspicious holy place. This great Kāmadeva (i.e. god of love) practises penance there. For a thousand divine years he worships Śiva. During the time of his abstract meditation he was burnt by the magnanimous Śiva. On the day of the bright parvan (i.e. the full moon day) the fire resembled a white mountain. All those remaining with Cupid were burnt and they lived at Kusumeśvara. After a thousand divine years the great lord (Śiva) was pleased with them. Rudra, the giver of boons, was, along with Umā, pleased with them. All they remaining on the bank of Narmadā were liberated. By the power of that holy place they again attained godhead. 'O Mahādeva, let the holy place be excellent by your favour.' The holy place has extended up to half a yojana all around. A man, given to fasting, having bathed at that holy place is honoured in the form of Cupid in Rudra's heaven. Yama, Kāmadeva, Vaiśvānara and Vāyu who had formerly come there, practised penance there only. A man who within the limit of half a yojana from there, near Andhona, not far away from the holy place, bathes, gives gifts, (gives) food (to brāhmaṇas), offers piṇḍas, enters fire, or water, or fasts, is never reborn after dying there. The best man should bathe himself with the water

sacred to Tryambaka. The manes of him, who duly offers piṇḍas at the root of Andhona, remain pleased as long as the moon and the sun remain (in the sky). A man or a woman who bathes there when the sun enters the northern solstice, would, (being) pure, live in the abode (of Siddheśvara) (and) the man, would obtain, by worshipping Siddheśvara in the morning, that status of the good which cannot be obtained by (performing) great sacrifices; and during the time of his stay at the holy place, an ugly man becomes handsome. In the mortal world, he becomes the king (of the earth) upto the oceans. (If) he would not see Kṣetrapāla, and the mighty Daṇḍapāla his pilgrimage would be fruitless, (also) by not seeing (i.e. visiting) Karṇakuṇḍala.

122. Having learnt this fruit of (the visit to) sacred places, all the gods that had assembled there, showered flowers and praised Kusumeśvara.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Śuklatīrtha

Nārada said :

1-2a. Thence he should devoutly go to Bhārgaveśa where the demons were destroyed by god Viṣṇu with his huṁkāra sound. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is free from all sins.

2b-6. O son of Pāṇḍu, also listen to the (description of) Śuklatīrtha. Mārkaṇḍa, seeing god (Mahādeva) with Umā, who was seated on the peak of Himālaya which was charming, variegated with various minerals, which resembled the young sun and heated gold, which had the staircase of strong crystals, which had a slab of stone with a variegated strap, which was golden, which was divine and adorned with many lotuses, asked (Mahādeva) who was omniscient, who was the immutable lord, who favoured the worlds, who was surrounded by the hosts of attendants and by Skanda, Nandi, Mahākāla, and attendants like Vīrabhadra :

7. "O Mahādeva, god of gods, praised by (gods like) Indra and Kāma, I am afraid of the worldly existence. Tell me the means of happiness.

8. O you revered lord, the lord of what has been and what will be, O you great god, describe to me the greatest among the holy places, destroying all sins."

The lord said:

9-29a. O illustrious brāhmaṇa, well-versed in all branches of knowledge, go, surrounded by the groups of sages, and have a bath etc. The sages Manu, Atri, Yājñavalkya, Kaśyapa, and Aṅgiras, Āpastamba, Saṁvarta, Kātyāyana, Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Gautama, desiring to secure righteousness asked him. At Kanakhala Gaṅgā is holy; and also Prayāga, Puṣkara and Gayā (are holy places). When the Sun is swallowed by Rāhu (i.e. on a solar eclipse day) Kurukṣetra also is holy. By day or at night, Śuklatīrtha gives a great fruit. On seeing it, touching (i.e. having contact with) it, bathing there, meditating, practising penance, (or performing) a sacrifice, (or by) fasting Śuklatīrtha gives great fruit. Śuklatīrtha is very holy and is well situated on the river. A royal sage named Cāṇikya attained perfection there. This holy place that sprang up extends over a yojana. Śuklatīrtha is very holy; it destroys all sins. When seen from the top of a tree it removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O best sage, I stay here with Umā. During the pure month of Vaiśākha, on the fourteenth day of the dark half, I go out from Kailāsa and stay there. Gods, kinnaras, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādharas, my attendants, nāgas, and all gods gather here; and remaining in the sky they have aeroplanes satisfying all desires. O lord of kings, those who desiring piety, come to Śuklatīrtha, (have their sins washed) as a garment is made (i.e. washed) white by a washerman. The sin collected from birth melts away at Śuklatīrtha. Even if he dies within the limit of half a yojana (of this holy place) he is not reborn. O Mārkaṇḍa, best of the sages, giving gifts and bathing (at this holy place) give a great merit. A holy place superior to Śuklatīrtha was never there nor will be there. A man having committed sins during his youth, removes (i.e. is free from) them by observing a fast for a day and night at Śuklatīrtha. That perfection which is had by means of penance,

self-restraint, sacrifices, giving gifts and offering presents to deities, is not had even by (performing) hundreds of sacrifices. On the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika a man should observe a fast and bathe (the image of) the lord with ghee. He, along with (members of his family) till the twentyfirst (descendant) will not fall from the divine position. Śuklatīrtha is a great holy place. It is resorted to by sages and siddhas. O king, having bathed (i.e. if he bathes) there, he is not reborn. Having bathed at Śuklatīrtha, he should worship Śiva. He should keep awake (during the night) by (resorting to) auspicious (things) like dancing, singing etc. In the morning he should bath in the Śuklatīrtha, and worship the deities. Being pure and devoted to Śiva's vow, he should then feed his preceptor according to his capacity; then he should take food; he should not be dishonest about wealth. Then after circumambulating he should gently approach the deity.

29b-36. Listen to the meritorious fruit that he who does like this, gets. Having got into a celestial car, being extolled by bevies of celestial nymphs and endowed with strength like that of Śiva, he lives till deluge. Listen to the meritorious fruit that a woman who gives pure gold (to a brāhmaṇa) at Śuklatīrha and would bathe Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya) with ghee and worship him—who does like this devoutly—obtains. As long as the fourteen Indras live in heaven he rejoices. He having fully restrained himself and composed, having bathed and observed a fast during the period of the sun's passage—north or south of the equator, on the fourteenth day, on a Saṁkrānti dayor on (the day of) the equinox, should give gifts according to his capacity. (Thereby) Viṣṇu and Śiva would be pleased. By the efficacy of Śuklatīrtha all (this) becomes inexhaustible. Listen to the meritorious fruit which he who carries a helpless person, an indigent brāhmaṇa, or even one who is dependent, obtains. He is honoured in Śiva's heaven for as many thousand years as the number of hairs (on the bodies of the persons) that are born in his family.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Naraka, Kapilātīrtha, Ṛṣitīrtha, Gaṇeśvara, Bhṛgutīrtha, Somatīrtha etc.

Nārada said:

1-12. Then he should go to (the holy place called) Naraka. He should bathe there. Merely by bathing there a man does not see (i.e. go to) hell. O you son of Pāṇḍu, listen to the greatness of this holy place. O lord of kings, all the bones which he would drop there, are dissolved, and the man becomes handsome. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kapilātīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. The man, who, when the month of Jyeṣṭha has come and especially on the fourteenth day, observes a fast devoutly, gives a tawny cow, and burning a lamp with ghee, bathes Śiva with ghee, and offers a coconut along with ghee, and in the end goes round, and gives a tawny cow with a bell and (other) ornaments (to a brāhmaṇa), becomes like Śiva, and is not born again. When Tuesday has come, especially on the fourth day (falling on Tuesday), a man should devoutly bathe (the image of) Śiva and give food to brāhmaṇas. When the ninth or the new moon day falls on a Tuesday, he should carefully bathe (the image of) Śiva. (Thereby) he would be handsome and fortunate. He should bathe the Phallus with ghee and devoutly honour brāhmaṇas. Surrounded by thousands, he (going in) Puṣpaka aeroplane, obtains the position of Śiva. He would not come here (i.e. to this world) again. He rejoices for an eternal time, and he becomes like Rudra. When the most righteous one comes to the mortal world due to his contact with (the fruits of) his deeds, he becomes a king, and becomes handsome and strong.

13-14a. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Ṛṣitīrtha. There the sage Tṛṇabindu, burnt my curse, resided. By the efficacy of that holy place a brāhmaṇa becomes free from sins.

14b-16a. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent Gaṇeśvara. Merely by bathing there on the fourteenth day when the month of Śrāvaṇa has come (i.e. on the fourteenth

day of Śrāvaṇa) a man is honoured in Rudra's heaven. By offering oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and the manes).

16b-25. Near Gaṇeśvara there is the excellent (holy place called) Gaṅgāvadana. A man who would bathe there with some desire or without any desire would undoubtedly be free from sins committed from birth. He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts. That entire merit is had at Gaṅgārāhvarka confluence, which was seen at Prayāga by the magnanimous Śiva. To a place in its west, near it, not far away there is (the holy place) called Daśāśvamedhika, well-known in the three worlds. A man having fasted for a night on the new moon day in the month of Bhādrapada, and having bathed, would go to the place where Śiva (dwells). He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the west of Daśāśvamedha, Bhṛgu, the best brāhmaṇa, worshipped the lord for a thousand divine years. He remained under an anthill; and to the right was the abode (of the lord). Umā and Śiva were amazed. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) asked the lord : "O great lord, who is dwelling here ? Tell me whether he is a god or a demon."

The lord said:

26. O dear one, the best brāhmaṇa named Bhṛgu, and best among the sages, remains in deep meditation and reflects upon me; he desires a boon.

27. On hearing this the goddess laughed and said to the lord: "The tuft of his hair has become like whirling smoke. Still you are not pleased. Therefore you are difficult to be propitiated. There is no doubt it."

God said :

28. O great goddess, you do not know; he behaves wrathfully. I shall show you the fact, and shall do what is dear to you.

29. Then the lord of gods brought to his mind his bull (i.e.

Nandi). Immediately on being remembered, the god's bull came there.

30. He spoke in a human voice: "O lord, order me." (The lord said:) "The brāhmaṇa is covered with anthill; knock him down on the ground."

31-32. He who was engrossed in abstract meditation, and who was reflecting (upon the lord) was knocked down by him. Then getting hot with anger in a moment, he raised his hand and said to the bull, "O bull, where will you talking like this go (now)? I shall today actually kill you—a wicked one."

33-45. Then the brāhmaṇa challenged the bull gone into the air. He saw him in the sky; O king, this was a very great wonder. Then, when Rudra laughed, the sage stood before him. Seeing his third eye, he fell on the ground through shame. Saluting the highest lord (by prostrating himself before him) like a staff, he extolled him. Having saluted the lord of beings and the origin of the mundane existence (he praised him:) "Afraid of the worldly life, O lord of the world, I beg of you of a divine form, a little welfare. O lord, which man is able to describe the multitudes of your qualities ? Perhaps Vāsuki, who has a thousand mouths may be able (to do so). O Śaṅkara, O lord of the earth, O revered one, forgive me; be gracious to me who am devoutly garrulous in your praise, and who have fallen at your feet. You are sattva, rajas and tamas. You (are the cause of) the maintenance, creation and destruction (of the world). O lord of the world, O master of the world, excepting you, there is no (other) deity. All this—self-control, vows, sacrifices, gifts, Vedic studies, efforts like determination—does not deserve (is not equal to) even the sixteen thousandth part of your devotion. The signs like the sword of the excellent elixir of life or going on foot by people, are clearly seen in the case of people who have bowed down to you in this existence. Even if a man salutes you fraudulently, you give Dharma to him, O you god of those who long for you. O lord, devotion has been produced to cut off the worldly existence and for liberation. O great lord, protect me who am taking delight in another's wife or wealth, who am tormented by insult and great grief, and who am scorched by false pride, who sported with the grandeur lasting for a moment, who am prone to cruel ways and who am fallen. Though the

direction is full of the groups of the helpless sense organs, like relatives, yet it is worthless. O Śaṅkara, why do you mock at me—a fool? O Mahādeva, remove my thirst (i.e. desire) quickly, give me wealth that would always remain in my heart; cut off the nooses of pride and delusion; liberate me."

46. This hymn named 'Karuṇābhyudaya' is divine and gives perfection. Śiva is pleased with him, as with Bhṛgu, who recites it devoutly.

The lord said:

47. O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased with you; ask for the boon desired by you.

The god along with Umā would give him a boon.

Bhṛgu said:

48. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, if a boon is to be given to me, then let there be Rudravedi (here). (Please) bring this about for me.

The lord said:

49-52a. O best of brāhmaṇas, there will be Krodhasthāna (i.e. place of anger). There will be no agreement between father and son.

Since then all gods like Brahmā, along with kinnaras, worship Bhṛgutīrtha, where Śiva was pleased. By seeing (i.e. visiting) that holy place a man is instantly free from sin. The creatures, helpless or independent, who die there, would undoubtedly go along the course of the very secret one (i.e. Brahman).

52b-57. This holy place is very extensive, and destroys all sins. Having bathed there men go to heaven; and those who die there, are not reborn. He should give sandals, an umbrella, food and gold and meal according to his capacity. It would be eternal. One should give according to his desire gifts on the day of the solar eclipse, and also bathe at the holy place—all this gives inexhaustible merit. Giving a bull on a lunar eclipse day or solar eclipse day is excellent. O king, foolish men, deluded by Viṣṇu's illusion do not know the divine Vṛṣatīrtha situated on (the bank

of) Narmadā. A man, who (even) once listens to the greatness of Bhṛgutīrtha, is free from all sins, and he goes to Rudra's world.

58-59a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place) Gautameśvara. Having bathed there, O king, and absorbed in observing a fast, he is honoured in Brahmā's world (after going there) in a golden aeroplane.

59b-62. He would then go to Dhautapāpa, where the bull washed (his sins). O king, it is situated on (the bank of) Narmadā, and destroys all sins. A man, having bathed at that holy place, is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. O great king, he who casts his life at that holy place, gets four hands and three eyes and becomes as powerful as Rudra. Valourous like Rudra, he would stay for a complete myriad of years (in Rudra's heaven). Having come to the earth after a long time, he would be a sovereign emperor.

63-67a. From there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Eraṇḍitīrtha. O king, the man who just bathes there gets the same fruit as Mārkaṇḍeya told about Prayāga. In the month of Bhādrapada, and on the eighth of the bright half, a man should observe a fast for a night and should bathe there. He would not be troubled by the messengers of Yama, and he goes to Indra's heaven. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu dwells. It is known as Hiraṇyadvīpa and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man becomes rich and handsome.

67b-69. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the great (holy place called) Kanakhala. O king, at that holy place Garuḍa practised penance. It is well known in all the worlds. Yoginī (i.e. Durgā) dwells there. She plays with the meditating saints and dances with Śiva. O king, one who bathes there, is honoured in Rudra's world.

70. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Īśatīrtha. There is no doubt that Īśa became free there and went up.

71-72. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu, the inconceivable lord, having resorted to the form of a boar, dwells. A man having bathed at Varāhatīrtha, especially on the twelfth, obtains Viṣṇu's heaven, and does not go to hell.

73-76. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Somatīrtha. He should bathe there especially on the full moon day. Bali having saluted the lord, is pleased with him. In the atmosphere is seen the celestial city of Hariś-candra. When Cakradhvaja (wheel-bannered one) returned, and Garuḍa-bannered one was asleep, the force of Narmadā's water resorted to Rurukaccha. Viṣṇu told Śaṅkara to stay there. Having bathed at Dvīpeśvara, a man would get great happiness.

77-82. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Rudrakanyā on the confluence. Merely by bathing there, a man would obtain the position of the goddess. Then he should go to Devatīrtha saluted by all gods. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he rejoices with deities. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to (the excellent holy place called) Śikhitīrtha. A gift given there becomes a crore times meritorious. On the new moon day in the dark half of the month he should bathe there. He should feed a brāhmaṇa. Thereby a crore (of brāhma-ṇas) is fed. O lord of kings, at Bhṛgutīrtha a crore of holy places are settled. A man having no desire, or having a desire, should bathe there. He obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and rejoices with deities. The best sage Bhṛgu obtained perfection there. The magnanimous Śaṅkara descended there.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Vīhageśvara, Narmadeśvara, Aśvatīrtha, Pitāmaha, Sāvitrītīrtha, Mānasa etc.

Nārada said:

1. O lord of kings, from there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Vihageśvara.

2. O lord of kings, by seeing it, he is free from all sins. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Narmadeśvara. O king, having bathed there he is honoured in heaven.

3. From there a man should go to Aśvatīrtha and should bathe there. He becomes prosperous, handsome and happy.

4-5. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Pitāmaha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. A man having bathed there should devoutly offer oblations to his dead ancestors. He should offer water mixed with sesamum and darbha. By the efficacy of that sacred place, everything becomes inexhaustible.

6-7. He, who, on reaching Sāvitrītīrtha, would bathe (there), is, after having shaken off all his sins, honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Just there is a beautiful and extremely auspicious sacred place. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of manes.

8. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Mānasa. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Rudra's world.

9-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Kratutīrtha. It is well-known in all worlds and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain all the desired objects like beasts, sons, wealth which he prays for.

11. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the well-known holy place called Tridaśadyoti.

12-13. There those daughters of sages of good vows practised penance (with the desire): 'May the immutable lord, the master, be our husband.' Mahādeva i.e. Hara, the highest lord, taking up a fierce form, of a deformed face and loathsome, came to that sacred place. There the maidens, O great king, (practised penance) for a boon.

14-15a. He who would go to Kanyārddhi, gives a daughter (i.e. gets the merit of giving a daughter in marriage). There O great king, is a well-known sacred place (named) Daśakanyā. Having bathed there he should worship the lord. (Thereby) he is free from all sins.

15b-16a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the sacred place known as Svargabindu. Having bathed there, O king, a man never meets with misfortune.

16b-17a. From there he should go to Apsareśa, and should bathe there. Remaining in the world of Nāgas he sports and rejoices with celestial nymphs.

17b-31. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the ex-

cellent (sacred place called) Narakatīrtha. Having bathed there, he should go to Bhārabhūta. Having reached this holy place, which is a manifestation of Śiva, and having worshipped Virūpākṣa (i.e. Śiva) there, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven. The magnanimous man, bathing at the holy place Bhārabhūta, gets the position of Śiva, wherever he may be dead. The wise say that worshipping Śiva during the month of Kārtika is hundred times more meritorious than a horse sacrifice. He should fashion a hundred lamps, and should give them (to a brāhmaṇa) after filling them with ghee. He goes in aeroplanes resembling the thunderbolt (in strength) to the place where Śaṅkara stays. He, who would present a bull resembling a conch, or a kunda-flower, or the moon, goes to Rudra's world in a car to which bulls are yoked. O king, he who would give a vessel and also sweetened milk mixed with honey, and various eatables, and (he) who would feed (brāhmaṇas) according to his capacity, would, O lord of kings, have all that increased a crore-fold by the efficacy of that sacred place. Having sprinkled the water over (the image of Śiva) and having worshipped Śiva, he would not meet with misfortune by the efficacy of that sacred place. He, who, having reached this holy place, would cast his life, goes, with his soul absolved of all sins, to (the place) where Śiva (dwells). O king, he who enters water (i.e. bathes) at that holy place, goes to Rudra's heaven in a car to which swans are yoked. As long as the moon, the sun, the Himālayas, the great ocean, or the waters of the Ganges (will remain), he is honoured in heaven. O king, he who would observe a fast at that sacred place, is not required to live in the womb (i.e. is not reborn), O lord of kings. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Aṭavītīrtha. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain half of Indra's seat.

32-34. Thence he should go to Śṛṅgatīrtha which destroys all sins. By merely bathing there he gets the position of Śiva. The confluence of Eraṇḍi and Narmadā is well-known. The holy place there is meritorious and destroys all sins. Being engaged in fasting and always intent upon (reaching) Brahman, he, having bathed there, is free from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, O lord of kings.

35-42. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the conflu-

ence of Narmadā and the ocean (i.e. where Narmadā flows into the sea). It is well-known as Jamadagni; and Viṣṇu is settled there. Having performed many sacrifices there, Indra became the lord of gods. Having bathed there at the confluence of Narmadā and the ocean, O king, a man gets threefold fruit of a horse-sacrifice. The intimate union with the western ocean is (just) the opening of the gate to salvation. There gods with gandharvas, and sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, worship Vimaleśvara, the lord of gods, thrice (a day). With his soul free from all sins, he is honoured in Rudra's world. There was never a great sacred place like Vimaleśvara, nor will there be any great holy place like Vimaleśvara. Those who after fasting there, see Vimaleśvara, have their souls freed from all sins, and go to Rudra's heaven.

43-44. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the Keśinītīrtha. He, intent on observing a fast, restrained and with his diet controlled, and fasting for a night is absolved (of the sin) of the murder of a brāhmaṇa by the efficacy of that holy place. (For him) who would see Sāgareśvara, the best holy place, or would remain within a distance of a yojana from it, Śiva is settled in the eddy. There is no doubt that when it is seen, all the holy places are seen. He, being free from all sins, goes there where Rudra dwells.

45-52. Ten crores of holy places exist within the distance between the confluence of Narmadā and Amarakaṇṭaka. O lord of kings, the walking about from the holy place—the pilgrimage, was resorted to by a crore of sages. The pilgrimages were undertaken by men who maintained the sacred fire, who were the divine portions and who had mastered all knowledge. Therefore, all the holy places give him a holy bath, who would devoutly recite and listen to it daily; and Narmadā would always be pleased with him. Rudra would be pleased with him, and so also the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya. A barren woman gets sons; an unfortunate woman (i.e. one who is disliked by her husband) becomes fortunate. A groom obtains a virgin; whosoever desires what, obtains it. No doubt should be raised about it. A brāhmaṇa gets (the knowledge of) the Vedas; a kṣatriya would be victorious; a vaiśya obtains grains, and a śūdra obtains felicity. A fool would obtain knowledge. A man who would

recite this three times a day would not see (i.e. go to) hell and would not go to (i.e. get) an ignominous birth.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Story of Five Gandharva Maidens

Nārada said:

1-2. O king, I have thus described to you the excellent Narmadātīrtha. Formerly the fire of the drops of the water of Revā destroyed the excessive fear due to the curse of the daughters of gandharvas. A man is liberated by the touch of the drops of the water of Revā.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3-6. O revered one, wherefrom did the many daughters get a curse? Whose children were they? What were their names and their ages? How did they get free from the fruit of the curse by the contact of the water? Where did they bathe? O lord, tell me all this. The greatness of the Narmadātīrtha would be surprising. It is said to destroy sins even by listening to it. He who utters the word 'Narmadā, Narmadā', gets eternal liberation as long as the moon and stars exist.

7-8. Formerly you told me the excellent importance of Revā. Still, O good one, tell me the story; also about the best livelihood that should be resorted to by the wise. Therefore, O best of brāhmaṇas, I am asking about the excellent importance of Revā. O lord, tell me the history, bright due to the deeds of the maidens.

Nārada said:

9. O best king, listen to the great story infused with righteousness. As the araṇi (i.e. the piece of wood used for kindling sacrificial fire) contains fire, similarly Dharma is produced by Brahmā.

10. (There was) a gandharva by name Śukasaṅgīti. His daughter was Pramohinī. Suśīlā was the daughter of Suśīla. Susvarā was the daughter of Svaravedin. Sutārā was Candrakānta's daughter and Candrikā was that of Suprabha.

11-18. O king, these were the execellent names of those celestial nymphs. All the five maidens were beautiful due to their being in the prime of youth. They always talked among themsellves like sisters. They as it were came out of the moon like the bright moonlight. Their faces were (beautiful) like the moon; they had lovely hair; and were bright like moonlight. They (the damsels) were among gods as moonlight in white lotuses opening at moonrise. They were born with lumps of (i.e. excessive) beauty; they had celestial forms and were charming. The lotuses of their breasts were shooting forth; they looked like the ketakī plants in the spring. They were charming on account of the youth that had arisen like the foliage of a grove of creepers. They were yellowish like gold; their lustre was like gold; they were decorated with golden ornaments. They had put on the garlands of golden campaka (flowers). Their beautiful garments appeared golden. They were proficient in the musical scale, in various melodies, in beating in (playing on) musical instruments, in diversions, and in playing upon flute and lute, as well as in dance accompanied with singing and instrumental music and in the time in music like the middle one and the fast one; also in diversions like (drawing) pictures and arts.

19. The maidens that were like this were infatuated with excellent sports. Fondled by their parents all of them moved in Kubera's abode.

20-24. Once through curiosity, the five maidens—the celestial damsels—getting together in the spring season, collecting mandara flowers from grove after grove, went to the Acchoda lake to propitiate Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Taking excellent golden lotuses along with beautiful blue lotuses from that (lake), having bathed on the pavement of lapis lazuli and clear crystal, having put on their garments, they silently fashioned a golden image of Umā with golden and pearl ornaments on an altar. The young girls, having worshipped Gaurī, decorated with sandal (-paste), perfumes and saffron, with excellent lotuses etc. and with various presents, danced to the accompaniment of singing and instru-

mental music. Having resorted to singing with high notes, the fawn-eyed ones then sang, with natural voice and melodies, songs containing beautiful letters (i.e. words) and raised to a high pitch and made melodious by (various) modes.

25-36a. At that time, to the exellent holy place of the Acchoda came for a bath the eldest son of the sage, the abode of (the knowledge of) the Vedas, when the girls were delighted with the shower of emotions, and with their minds full of joy. The young man was (having) boundless handsomeness, had a charming face, and his eyes were large like blooming lotuses. His chest was broad, he had good (i.e. strong) arms, he was very handsome; his complexion was dark; he was like another Cupid. That celibate, with a good (i.e. a large) tuft of hair, shone with his staff as Cupid with his bow. The excellent one had covered himself with dear-skin, he had put on marks (on his body) and had a girdle of the muñja grass resembling gold round his waist. Seeing that brāhmaṇa on the bank of the lake, the girls, full of curiosity, were delighted (and said): "This one will be our guest." Ardently longing to see him they gave up singing and dancing, and were pierced by Cupid with his arrows, as female dear are pierced by a hunter. The five (maidens) were stupefied, confused and said (to one another): "See, see." They mistook the excellent youth for the god of love. Having repeatedly worshipped him with their eyes as with lotuses, the celestial nymphs began deliberation among themselves: "If this is god of love, (then) how can he be without (his spouse) Rati? Or is he the (twin) gods Aśvins, moving in pair? Is he a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a siddha taking up any form he likes? Or is he the son of a sage, or is he the best one among men? Or is he someone whom the Creator has created for us ? As a treasure is fashioned by (their) former deeds for the fortunate, in the same way, Gaurī, with her heart moistened by the billows of the water of compassion, has brought this excellent groom for us. I have chosen him, you have chosen him, similarly this one also has chosen him."

36b-44. O best king, when the five girls were talking like this, the intelligent one who had finished his mid-day rites there, thought: 'Doing what will be meritorious? Gādhi's son, Parāśara and others, and also Kaṇḍu, Devala and other brāhmaṇas, though strong due to their being meditating saints, were easily

deluded by women. It is (indeed) wonderful. The deer of whose mind does not fall when struck with the sharp arrows of the eyes (i.e. glances) of youthful women, shot from the creeper-like brows, by the archer viz. Cupid? As long as a man is not intoxicated by the spirituous liquors of the eyes (i.e. glances) of women, his moral sense dominates. There is in him the fear of the society; he is self-possessed; there is a consideration of the family; there is the strength of penance; men practice tranquility. Women with their charming amorous gestures delude and madden a passionate man. These (maidens are trying to) delude and madden me, who am intent upon guarding my righteousness by means of my own virtues. Passionate men, with their minds deluded, imagining charm (to be present) in the worthless and impure bodies of women, made of flesh, blood, feces and urine, enter (i.e. cohabit with) them. Wise sages of pure hearts have described women to be fearful. As long as these women do not approach me, I shall go home.'

45-47. By the time (i.e. before) the excellent maidens approached him, the brāhmaṇa vanished by the power of Viṣṇu. Seeing the wonderful act of that celibate, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who vanished by the power of magic, the maidens, O king, with their eyes frightened and themselves afraid like young female deer, moving their eyes looked into the ten vacant directions.

The maidens said:

48-58. Clearly he knows magic, or he knows (art of creating) illusion. Though seen (by us) he has (suddenly) vanished.

Thus they talked with one another. Just then only their hearts were pervaded by the fire of separation, as a very beautiful forest would be entirely pervaded by blazing wild fire. "O charming one, give up your magical skill. Present yourself to us quickly. It is not proper for you (to act) in the manner of a fly (falling into the food even) before a morsel (is eaten). Alas! Why were you shown to us? Why were you created by the Creator? We know, you, the cause of great tormentation to us, are self-created. Is it that your heart is cruel? Do you not entertain good intention towards us? O charming one, are you cruel? Are you stealing our minds? Do you not trust us? Are you

testing us? Are you not having affection for us? Are you skilled in deception? Do you possess the skilful knowledge of entering our hearts? But why do you not know the means of getting out? Why are you so much angry with us without our fault? Do you not realise the pain of others or their deception? O lord of our hearts, we are doomed by your disappearance. We shall not live without seeing you, but shall live only with the hope of seeing you. Quickly take us where you have gone. Creator, who has robbed (us) of your sight, has cut off the sprout of our joy. By all means present yourself to us. Take full pity on us. Good people do (wait to) see the end of anything."

59-61a. Crying like this, and waiting (there) for a long time, the maidens then, through fear of their parents, started to go home. Bound by the chains of his affection, and being very much distressed by separation (from him), they somehow mustered courage and went to their respective houses. Having come (home) all of them fell down near their mothers.

61b-74. The mothers asked them: "What is this? Why are you late?" "As we were playing with kinnarīs, we stayed together (with them) at the Acchoda lake; therefore we did not realise (how far) the day (had advanced). O mother(s), on our way we were exhausted; therefore our bodies have suffered. Due to some great confusion we are unable to speak." Speaking like this, the beautiful maidens, concealing the expression of their faces, talked with their mothers, and rolled on the jewelled floor. Some did not make their peacock, kept for pleasure, dance in joy. Others did not teach their parrot out of curiosity. Some other did not fondle her mongoose. Someone else, extremely confused, did not at all play with the cranes. They did not resort to (any) diversion, nor did they rejoice in their houses. They did not properly talk with their relatives, nor did they play on the lute. All the flowers of the desire-yielding tree were like fire to them. They did not drink the sweat honey having the fragrance of mandara flowers. The maidens had their eyes (i.e. eye-sight) fixed on the tips of their noses like female ascetics. They were continuously, but aimlessly, thinking. They had fixed their mind on that best man. For a moment they remained in a cave, covered with moonstones, with a stream (flowing) at its opening. For a moment they stayed at a window, and for a moment in the

house with artificial fountains. For a moment they prepared beds with the leaves of lotus-creepers (growing) in the lakes. They were fanned by their friends with the leaves of lotus-creepers. In this way the excellent maidens passed the night resembling a yuga. Somehow they sustained themselves. They were delirious as if they suffered from fever. In the morning, on seeing the gem of the sky (i.e. the sun), they thought that they were alive. Having informed their own mothers, they went to worship Gaurī. Having bathed according to the proper rite, and again naving worshipped the goddess with flowers and incense, they remained there singing.

75-81. In the meanwhile, that brāhmaṇa also came from his father's hermitage to that Acchoda lake to bathe (there). Seeing that celibate, the maidens were delighted, with their eyes expanded, as the white-lotus plants are joyful (i.e. bloom) on seeing the sun at the end of the night. Those young girls went near the celibate, and they put round him the nooses formed by joining their right and left hands. (They said to him:) "O dear one, yesterday you went (leaving us). Today you cannot go. You have been chosen by us. There can be no doubt about this." The brāhmaṇa who was (caught) in the noose of their arms and who was thus addressed, laughed and said: "You are saying auspicious, favourable words. But that would destroy the vow of me, who am still in the first stage of life (i.e. celibacy) and given to studies. I have not yet reached the other end (i.e. have not completed my studies) in my preceptor's house. Very wise men practise the way of life which is to be practised in a particular stage of life. Therefore, O maidens, I do not think marriage to be the (proper) way of life (for me)."

82-92. Having heard the words of the brāhmaṇa, the excellent maidens who were eager and who made sweet and indistinct sound like the cuckoos in the spring season, said to the brāhmaṇa: "Material welfare (*artha*) is (better) than piety (*dharma*); satisfaction of desires (*kāma*) is (superior) to material welfare. The rise of the fruit of happiness comes from the satisfaction of desires. In this way the wise who have firm convictions, describe it. That kāma (i.e. the satisfaction of desires) is standing before you due to your great righteousness. Resort to it with various enjoyments, since this ground is clean." Hearing these words of them he

spoke to them in serious words : "Your words are (i.e. what you say is) true; but (practising) my vow is essential. I shall go through the right of marriage (only) after I secure my preceptor's permission, not otherwise." Thus addressed, they again said to him : "O handsome one, you are evidently a fool. Excellent women, coming from good families, are a medicine made ready by the intelligence of Brahmā; they are a spell, a ready charm. O sage, they, when they have approached, should be properly; enjoyed by a wise man. If, fortunately a business becomes successful, the wise ones do not ignore it. Since indifference is not fruitful, therefore procrastination is not approved. Nectar should be taken even from poison; gold even from a filthy thing. Excellent knowledge should be obtained even from a mean person, and a gem of woman even from a bad family. (Only) fortunate men obtain maidens who are spotless due to being born in good families, whose hearts are wet with (i.e. full of) love, who talk sweetly, who choose their own grooms, who are beautiful and have a charming youth; and no other men (can obtain such maidens). How incongruous are we, the celestial beauties on one side and you, an ascetic boy on the other! I think the Creator alone is wise since he has done this impossible job (of bringing together two incongruous things). Therefore now you should accept us auspiciously by means of the Gāndharva type of marriage.[1] Otherwise we cannot live."

93-96. Hearing (these) words, the brāhmaṇa, the best among those who known Dharma, then said: "O you fawn-eyed maidens, how should men whose wealth is righteousness, give it up? The group of the four, viz. Dharma (i.e. piety), Artha (i.e. material welfare), Kāma (i.e. satisfaction of desires) and Mokṣa (i.e. liberation) is said to give fruit as (already) told. The opposite of this does not give fruit. Therefore, I who am observing a vow, shall not betake myself to a wife at a wrong time. He who does not know the time of an act (i.e. when the act should be done), does not get the fruit of that act. Since (now) my mind is attached to the consideration of Dharma, therefore, listen, O maidens, I do not desire marriage."

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1. Gāndharva Vivāha : One of the eight forms of marriage. In this form marriage takes place between lovers without seeking prior approval of relatives.

97-103a. Knowing this intention of him, they looked at each other, and let free his hand from their hands. Then Pramohinī seized his feet. Suśīlā and Susvarā seized his arms. Sutārā embraced him and Candrikā kissed (him on) his face. Yet he was unperturbed. Resembling the fire of deluge, and very violent due to rage, the young celibate cursed them: "Since like devils you clung to me, therefore you will be (turned into) devils." "What is this sinful act done to an innocent one through folly? You have done what is disagreeable to one who wants to do good to you. Fie upon you who have put an end to righteousness! We have heard that the happiness of the man who seeks to hurt those who are attached devoted friends, comes to an end in both the worlds. Therefore, you too, due to our curse, quickly be (turned into) a goblin."

103b-108. Speaking like this, the young girls were sighing, being full of anger. Due to mutual agitation, O king, those maidens and that celibate—all of them turned into goblins in that lake. That male goblin and the famale goblins crying fearfully, exhausted the ripening of the deeds they had formerly done. O king, a good or bad deed done formerly gives fruit when its due time (has come) (and) the fruit is unavoidable even for gods like one's own shadow. At various places the fathers and mothers, and brothers also of those young girls cried. Fate is insurmountable. Hereafter the goblins, being extremely unhappy, wandered here and there for food and lived on the bank of the lake.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Sage Lomaśa Comes to the Help of the Goblins

Nārada said:

1-6. After a long time the magnanimous, best sage Lomaśa who wandered as he liked, came there. Seeing the brāhmaṇa all the goblins living in a group and being overpowered by hunger and desiring to eat him, ran to him. Being burnt by the sharp lustre of Lomaśa, unable to stand before him, they remained

away from him. Then, that brāhmaṇa, who had become a goblin as a result of his former deeds, seeing Lomaśa, saluted him by prostrating himself before him, and putting his folded palms on his head spoke true and pleasant words, O king:

7-12. "O brāhmaṇa, at the time of the rise of great fortune there would be (obtained) the company of the good. Between a man who at all times bathes at the sacred places like the Ganges etc. and the one who keeps company with the good the latter is superior. O brāhmaṇa, company of the great gives seen and unseen fruits, gives (i.e. takes one to) heaven, removes diseases and is said to remove (mental) darkness." Saying so, he told him his former wonderful account. "These are those gandharva-daughters, and I am that son of a brāhmaṇa, O sage. All of us were foolish cursing one another (and turning) into goblins. O best sage, before you we are standing with melancholy faces. By seeing you, we the fools, shall be liberated. Would the mass of darkness cling to the atmosphere when the sun rises?" Hearing these words, Lomaśa, of a great lustre, with his heart tender with compassion, said to the sage's son who was afflicted: "Let the memory of all of you rise suddenly by my favour. Let all of you remain in righteousness, so that your mutual curse would come to an end."

The goblin said:

13. O great sage, tell us (what) righteousness (is), so that we shall be free from sins. This is not the time for delay, since the fire of curse is fierce.

Lomaśa said:

14-27. Let (all the goblins) duly bathe in Revā with me. Revā will free you from the curse. There would be no other expiation. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. It is my firm opinion that the sin of men would certainly perish by bathing in Revā. Bath in Revā would burn, as fire burns a heap of cotton, all the sins committed in the (previous) seven existences and the present one also. O goblin, all that sin for which (the wise) do not see an atonement, perishes merely by bathing in Narmadā. Bath in Narmadā causes knowledge. Therefore she gives salvation. All the holy places of the Himālaya remove sins. This

one giving (i.e. taking one to) Indra's heaven is fashioned by the teachers of the Vedas. Revā is said to give the fruits of (i.e. to satisfy) all desires and is the giver of liberation. She destroys sins, she removes sins, she gives the fruits of (i.e. satisfies) all desires. A bath in Narmadā gives (i.e. takes one to) Viṣṇu's heaven and destroys sins. A bath in Yamunā would be excellent for (going to) the Sun's world. A bath in Sarasvatī destroys sin, and gives (i.e. leads one to) Brahmā's heaven. O goblin, (a bath in) Viśālā is said to give a great fruit, and is the wild fire to the fuel of sins and the remover of the act of being conceived in a womb. A bath in Narmadā is said to lead to Viṣṇu's heaven and to liberation. Out of the rivers Sarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Kauśikī, Tāpī, Godāvarī, Bhīmā, Payoṣṇī, Kṛṣnaveṇī, Tuṅgabhadrā and others, Revā is reached (by a man) due to the meritorious deeds done in former existences. O sage's son, a bath there (i.e. in Revā) gives absence of rebirth. Gods, residing in heaven, always sing (i.e. say): "When shall we see Revā, bathing in which (river) men do not experience pangs of (living in) the womb, and remain near Viṣṇu?" Those men who, having many coatings of sins (i.e. who have committed many sins), everyday bathe here in the pure water of Revā, do not sink in hells due to their religious merit, (but) they well (i.e. comfortably) move in heaven like gods.

28. O goblin, formerly the creator weighed Revā against severe vows, acts of charity, penances, and sacrifices, and Revā, that accomplishes salvation quickly, was (i.e. proved) superior to them.

Nārada said:

29. Hearing those words of that Lomaśa, all the goblins quickly went with him to bathe in Revā.

30-34. Then fortunately breezes, giving (i.e. throwing) drops of water on the bodies of them who had come in contact with the stream (of Revā), arose on the bank of Revā. Due to the touch of the drops of the water of Revā, they were freed from their goblinhood. Being instantly endowed with divine bodies, they extolled Narmadā. Then, as told by Lomaśa, the brāhmaṇa happily married those daughters of gandharvas on the bank of Narmadā. Bathing there, drinking (the water of Narmadā)

and plunging into (Narmadā) they stayed there for a long time. Having worshipped Narmadā at this spot, they went to Viṣṇu's heaven. O king, I have thus told you the very auspicious account of Narmadā, which is highly meritorious and which removes sins merely by hearing it.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Piṅgatīrtha, Narmadā, Dvārāvatī, Timi etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Now tell me about other holy places described by Vasiṣṭha, on hearing about which sins perish, O Nārada.

Nārada said :

2-6a. O king, now hear about the holy places described by Vasiṣṭha. A self-restrained man, with his senses controlled, obtains (the fruit of) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on reaching the southern sea and gets into an aeroplane. A restrained man, having controlled his diet, having reached Carmaṇvatī, and being allowed by Rantideva, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Then, O righteous one, he should go to Arbuda (i.e. mountain Abu), the son of Himālaya, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, there was formerly a fissure in the earth. There is the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, well-known in the three worlds. Having lived there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

6b-9. O king, a restrained man, having bathed at Piṅgatīrtha, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a hundred tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa). Thence he should go to (the holy place) called Prabhāsa which is well-known in the world, O pious one; there Fire himself is always present. O hero, Fire, with Wind as his charioteer, is the mouth of the deities. A man, being pure and having controlled his mind, gets on bathing there the fruit of the Agniṣṭoma[1] and the Atirātra (sacrifices).

1. Agniṣṭoma: Name of a protracted sacrificial rite extending over several days in spring and forming an essential part of the Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.
Atirātra : An optional part of Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.

10-12. Going from there to the confluence of Sarasvatī and the ocean, he, having obtained the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows, is honoured in heaven. O best among the Bharatas, always shining like fire by means of his lustre, he, with his mind controlled, should bathe in the holy place of the king of waters; and living there for three nights, he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of the manes. He shines like Soma, and obtains (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice.

13-14a. O best among the Bharatas, O Yudhiṣṭhira, thence he should go to the sacred place called Varadāna where Durvāsas granted a boon to Viṣṇu. A man having bathed at Varadāna, gets the fruit of (having donated) a thousond cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

14b. Then being restrained and controlled in diet, he should go to Dvārāvatī.

15. A man having bathed at Piṇḍāraka would obtain much gold.

16-20. O you who restrain your enemies, at that holy place, O great king, even now coins marked with lotuses are seen. That is a wonder. O you descendant of Kuru, lotuses marked with tridents are seen. O best among the Bharatas, Mahādeva also dwells there. O you descendant of Bharata, having reached the confluence of the ocean and Sindhu, and having, with a controlled mind, bathed there, and offered oblations to manes, gods and sages, he obtains, shining with his own lustre, Varuṇa's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the wise say that having worshipped god Śaṅkukarṇeśvara, he gets ten times the merit obtained by (the performance of) a horse sacrifice.

21-25. Turning to the right, O best among the Bharatas, O best among the Kurus, he should go to the holy place, well known in the three worlds, named Timi which frees (one) from all sins and where gods like Śakra and others worship Maheśvara. A man having bathed there and having worshipped Rudra, surrounded by hosts of gods, is freed from the sins committed from his birth. O best among men, here is Timi, praised by all gods. O best among men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. O very wise one, formerly Viṣṇu conquered there Diti's son and, O king, made it pure by killing the nuisance (i.e. demons) to gods.

26-28. Thence, O you pious one, he should go to Vasudhārā praised (by all); by just going there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed there and with his mind controlled, should, O best among the Kurus, offer oblations to manes and gods. He is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among the Bharatas there is also a great holy place of the Vasus. Having bathed there, and drunk (water from the place) a man is liked by the Vasus.

29. (Then there is) a holy place known as Sindhutama which destroys all sins. O best man, having bathed there (a man) would get much gold.

30-31. Being pure and with his mind controlled, he of good acts and free from passion, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, on reaching Brahmatuṅga. For the maidens the holy place of Śakra is resorted to by siddhas. Having bathed there, O best of men, he would obtain (i.e. go to) Indra's heaven.

32-33. There only is the holy place of (i.e. sacred to) Reṇukā. A brāhmaṇa having bathed there would be pure like the moon. Then, being restrained and having controlled his food he, after going to Pañcanada, obtains (i.e. performs) the five sacrifices which have been described in a sequence.

34-38. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of (i.e. sacred to) Bhīma. Having bathed there a man does not go into a womb (i.e. is not reborn). He would be the son of a goddess. There is Kuṇḍalavigraha. (There) he would get the great fruit of (having donated) a hundred thousand cows. Having reached Girikuñja, well-known in the three worlds, and having saluted the Grandsire (there), he would obtain the fruit (of having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa). O righteous one, from there he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Vimala, where even now golden and silver fish are seen. O best of men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice; and with his soul purified of all sins he would get the highest position.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Vitastā, Malada, Maṇimanta, Brahmavālaka etc.

Nārada said :

1-3. O descendant of Bharata, a man after having reached Vitastā, and after having offered oblations to the manes and deities, gets the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. In Kāśmīra itself is the abode of Nāga and also of Takṣaka known as Vitastā and removing all sins. A man having bathed there would indeed obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Being free from all sins, he would go to the highest position.

4-6. Thence he should go to Malada which is well-known in the three worlds. At the time of the last evening prayer, O king, he should after having duly bathed offer an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together[1] to fire according to his capacity. The wise say that offerings made to the manes is inexhaustible. An offering of the oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together to Fire is superior to (the donation of) a thousand cows, or a hundred Rājasūya sacrifices or a thousand horse sacrifices.

7-8. Returning from there, O lord of kings, he should enter the abode of Rudra. Having gone to Mahādeva, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, a controlled and calm man having reached Maṇimanta and having stayed there for a night, would get the fruit of an Angiṣṭoma sacrifice.

9-11. Thence O best of kings, he should go to Devikā well-known in the world, where the progeny of brāhmaṇas is heard (to exist), O best of the Bharatas, and where Śiva's abode is known in the three worlds. A man having bathed at Devikā and having worshipped Maheśvara and having offered presents (to deities) according to his capacity, gets the fruit of a sacrifice rich in all desired objects.

12-14. There is Rudra's holy place called Kāmākhya liked by gods and sages. O descendant of Bharata, having bathed there a man quickly gets liberation. Then going to Yājana and also to Brahmavālaka and having bathed at Puṣpanyāsa, he would

1. Caru : An oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to gods or manes.

not be worried about death. The pious Devikā liked by gods and sages is said to be half a yojana wide and five yojanas in length.

15-17a. Then O righteous one, he should, according to the order, go to Dīrghasatra where gods like Brahmā, siddhas, great sages, getting initiated and controlled in vows, resort to a prolonged sacrificial session. O lord of kings, O you who control your enemies, by just going there a man obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifice.

17b-20a. Then restrained and with his diet controlled he should go to Vinaśana, where Sarasvatī concealed under the slope of Meru goes (i.e. flows). She is seen at Camasa, Śivodbheda and at Nāgodbheda. He would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on bathing at Camasodbheda; a man having bathed at Śivodbheda would get the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. A man bathing at Nāgodbheda would obtain (i.e. go to) the world of Nāgas.

20b-24. Then O descendant of Bharata, O lord of kings, he should reach the excellent holy place Śaśayāna where Puṣkara is hidden in the form of a hare. They, O glorious one, O best of Bharatas, every year live there on the full moon day of Kārtika and bathe in Sarasvatī. O best among men, having bathed there he always shines like Śiva. O best among the Bharatas, he would obtain the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. O descendant of Kuru, having reached Kumārakoṭi and being controlled he engaged in worshipping gods, would bathe there. He obtains a myriad of cows and would liberate his own family.

25-31. Then being calm, O pious one, he should go to Rudrakoṭi, where, O great king, a crore sages were brought together. Overcome with rain they, desiring to see the god, (said:) "I shall see Śiva first, I shall see Śiva first." Thus, O king, the sages started, O descendant of Bharata. Then, O king, the lord of the meditating saints, having resorted to deep meditation, created, for pacifying the distress of the pure sages, a crore Rudras who stood before the sages. They separately (i.e. each one of them) thought: 'I have seen Śiva first.' Mahādeva was pleased due to the great devotion of the sages of strong lustre and gave them a boon: "From today righteousness in you will increase." O best among man, a man having bathed there at Rudrakoṭi and (thus

being) pure, obtains (the fruit of) Aśvamedha and would liberate his family.

32-34. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the confluence well-known in the world. He should worship the very meritorious Viṣṇu on (the bank of) Sarasvatī where gods like Brahmā, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas go on the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra. Having bathed there, O best of men, a man would obtain much gold. With his soul purified of all sins he goes to Śiva's heaven. He would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows if he dies there where the sacrificial sessions of the sages were accomplished.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Kurukṣetra, Pāriplava, Śalvikinī, Koṭitīrtha etc.

Nārada said:

1-6. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Kurukṣetra praised (by all). All creatures who have gone there have been freed from their sins. He, who always says "I shall go to Kurukṣetra, I shall stay at Kurukṣetra", is absolved of all sins. O king, a wise man should live there for a month, to which very meritorious (Brahmakṣetra) gods like Brahmā, brāhmaṇic sages, cāraṇas, gandharvas, celestial nymphs, yakṣas and pannagas go, O descendant of Bharata. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sins of him who even mentally longs for Kurukṣetra, perish, and he goes to Brahmā's heaven. O you, who are perpetuating the Kuru family, a man going to Kurukṣetra with faith, obtains the fruit of Vājapeya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

7. Then he (should go) to the very powerful doorkeeper Mattakarṇa, O king. Having just saluted him, he would get the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

8-9. Thence, O pious one, he should go the excellent place of Viṣṇu, where, O lord of kings, Viṣṇu is always present. Having bathed there and having seen Viṣṇu, the origin of the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

10-13a. Thence a man should go to the holy place (called) Pāriplava which is well-known in the three worlds. (By going there) he obtains (the fruit of) Āgniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices. A man would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows by reaching (this) holy place on the earth. Thence O king, a man visiting holy places, should go to (the holy place) called Śālvikinī. Having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika he obtains the same fruit. Having reached Sarpanīvi, the best holy place of nāgas, he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice, and goes to the world of nāgas.

13b-15. Then O pious one, he should go to the doorkeeper Atarṇaka. Having stayed there for a night, he would obtain the fruit (of donation) of a thousand cows. Then, being controlled and having his diet restrained, he, having gone to Pañcanada and having bathed at Koṭitīrtha, would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Having visited the Aśvinī-tīrtha, he is born handsome.

16-19. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best sacred place Varāha where formerly Viṣṇu dwelt in the form of a boar. O best of men, having stayed there he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the Soma-tīrtha at Ujjayinī. Having bathed (there), a man obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). A man, having bathed at Ekahaṁsa, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Having reached Kṛtaśauca, the pilgrim would obtain (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka, and would become one who has purified himself.

20-24a. Then he (should go) to the holy place called Muñjāvaṭa of the wise Mahādeva. Having lived there for a night he would obtain the position of the head of Śiva's attendants. Then, O great king, having bathed and gone to Jayā well-known in the world, he would obtain all desired objects. O best among Bharatas, that is a well-known gate to Kurukṣetra. The pilgrim turning to the right, and having returned, having bathed at Saṁsmṛta of the Puṣkaras, should worship the deities in the form of manes. (Paraśu-) Rāma, the noble son of Jamadagni, invoked them (here) only. O king, the man would have accomplished his object, and would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

24b-38a. O king, thence the pilgrim should go to Rāma-hrada where, O lord of kings, Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), of a

blazing lustre having powerfully and speedily expelled the kṣatriyas, resorted to the five deep lakes after filling them with blood. This is what we have heard, O best among men. He offered oblations to his forefathers, and also his great grandsires. Then, O king, the forefathers, being pleased, said to Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma): "O Rāma, Bhārgava, we are highly pleased with you by your devotion to your forefathers and your valour. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon. O you highly intelligent one, what do you desire?" O lord of kings, that Rāma, best among speakers, who was thus addressed (by his forefathers), said, with the palms of his hands joined, (these) words to the forefathers who remained in the sky: "If you are pleased with me, if you favour me, then I desire the increase in my penance; and by your lustre I may be freed from the sin that I, overcome by anger, (committed by having) destroyed the kṣatriyas, and the lakes which have become sacred to me should be well-known on the earth." Hearing these good words of Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), his forefathers, extremely pleased and full of great joy said to him: "Due especially to your devotion to your forefathers, may your penance increase again. You are freed from the sin that you, overcome by anger, killed the kṣatriyas. They were killed due to their own (mis-) deeds. The lakes will undoubtedly be the holy places (named) after you. The manes of him who, after bathing in these lakes, will offer oblations to his manes, will be pleased with him, and will grant him his desired object and eternal (residence) in heaven." O king, the manes of Paraśurāma, being pleased and having granted him such a boon and taking leave of Bhārgava, vanished there only. Thus the lakes are sacred to the noble Bhārgava i.e. Paraśurāma. A man of self-control and good vows, after bathing in the lakes of (i.e. sacred to) Paraśurāma, and worshipping him, would obtain much gold.

38b-40. Then, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a pilgrim, having reached Vaṁśamūla, would liberate his family by bathing at Vaṁśamūlaka. O best among Bharatas, having reached Kāyaśodhana, a man who has bathed there, obtains the purity of his body; there is no doubt about it. And with his body purified he goes to pious, excellent worlds.

41-44. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the holy place rare in the three worlds, where formerly the mighty Viṣṇu

liberated people. O king, having reached (that) holy place (called) Lokoddhāra, well-known in the three worlds, and having bathed there, he liberates his own people. Having reached Śrītīrtha, he obtains excellent wealth. A man being restrained and calm, having reached Kapilātīrtha, and having bathed there and worshipped deities and manes, obtains the fruit of (having donated) a thousand tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

45-46a. Going to Sūryatīrtha and with his mind controlled he should bathe there, and devoutly observing a fast he should worship (his) manes and deities. (By doing so) he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world.

46b-47a. A pilgrim who, after reaching Gavāṁtīrtha according to the (proper) order, bathes there, would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows.

47b-49. O king, a pilgrim (then), after reaching Gaṅgātīrtha and bathing at the Kanyātīrtha, obtains excellent power. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the doorkeeper (called) Lavarṇaka. O king, having bathed there at the holy place (in the stream of) Sarasvatī as in that of the noble Indra, a man would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

50-55a. Then, O pious king, he should go to (the holy place called) Brahmāvarta. He having bathed at Brahmāvarta would obtain (i.e. go to) Brahmā's heaven. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Sutīrthaka where gods are always present with the manes. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the world of manes. Then, O best of Bharatas, going to another holy place in order and having bathed in the sacred places of Kāśīśvara, he, being free from all diseases, is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, Mātṛtīrtha is just there, having bathed where his progeny increases (in number), and, O king, he would obtain a position in heaven.

55b-61a. Then being controlled and with his diet restrained, he should go to Śītavana. O great king, there is a great holy place which is difficult to be found elsewhere. By merely seeing it and by restraint, O king, he is purified. O descendant of Bharata, having offered his hair at that (holy place), he is purified. Then there is another holy place known as Snātalokārtiha. O

you best among men, O you best of the Bharatas, learned brāhmaṇas, highly devoted to it, having bathed there, obtain the best position (i.e. salvation). O best of Bharatas, at the holy place (called) Svarṇalomāpanayana, best brāhmaṇas cast off their hair after controlling their breath. Then, with their souls purified, O lord of kings, they go to the highest position (i.e. get salvation). O king, having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika (situated) at that holy place only, O tiger (i.e. best) among men, men with their souls purified go to the highest position (i.e. obtain salvation).

61b-67a. O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, well known in the world. O king, there a black deer tormented by a hunter with arrows, plunged into that lake and obtained manhood. A man, being restrained and calm, having bathed at the holy place, has his soul purified from all sins, and is honoured in heaven. O king, to the east of (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, at a distance of a krośa (i.e. two miles) there is a well-known river called Āpagā, which is resorted to by siddhas. One who gives there the meal of Śyāmāka rice dedicating it to the deities and manes, obtains a great fruit of his piety. If (only) one brāhmaṇa is fed, a crore brāhmaṇas are fed. Having bathed there and worshipped the deities and also the manes, and having stayed there for a night, one would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

67b-71a. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of Brahmā, known in the world as Brahmānusvara, O descendant of Bharata. O you best among the Bharatas, he who being pure and with his mind controlled, bathes there at the holy pools of the seven sages, and O lord of kings, at Kedāra and at the holy place of the noble Kapila, goes to Brahmā, and with his soul purified of all sins, goes to Brahmā's heaven. Having reached Kapiṣṭhala's (place called) Kedāra, difficult to reach, he, with his sins burnt by penance, acquires (the art of) becoming invisible.

71b-79a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to (the holy place called) Sarvaka, well-known in the world. Having gone to the bull-bannered one (i.e. Śiva) on the fourteenth day of the dark half, he gets all his desired objects and goes to heaven. O descendant of Kuru, there are three crores of holy

places. At the pond there is Rudrakoṭi; in the lakes there is Samantaka. O best of Bharatas, there only is the holy place Ilāspada. Having bathed and worshipped deities and manes there, one does not meet with calamities and obtains the (fruit of) Vājapeya sacrifice. O king, having bathed at Kiṁdāna and also at Kiṁjapa, a man obtains immeasurable (fruit of) gifts and sacrifice. One having faith and his senses under control having bathed at Kalaśī, obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. To the east of Saraka there is an auspicious place known as Rāmajanma, O greatest among Kurus, which is sacred to Nārada. O descendant of Bharata, one who having bathed there casts his life, being permitted by Nārada, obtains worlds difficult to obtain. One should enter (i.e. go to) Puṇḍarīka on the tenth of the bright half (of a month). Having bathed there, O king, he would obtain the fruit of Puṇḍarīka.

79b-85. Thence he should go to Triviṣṭapa, well-known in the three worlds. There is the auspicious river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a man) from sins. Having bathed there and worshipped (Śiva) holding the trident in his hand and having the bull as his banner, and (thus) with his soul purified from all sins, he would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Phalakivana. Gods have always resorted to that Phalikivana, and practised penance for many thousand years. One having bathed at Dṛṣatpāna and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices. O lord of kings, having bathed at the place sacred to all gods, one obtains the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows. A man having bathed at (the holy place called) Pāṇikhyāta, and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains (the fruit of) Rājasūya, and also goes to the world of sages.

86-87. Thence, O pious one, one should go to (the holy place called) Miśraka which is well-known in the world. O lord of kings, we have heard that the noble Vyāsa has brought together the holy places at that place for brāhmaṇas. One who bathes at Miśraka has well bathed at all holy places.

88-95. Thence being controlled and having his food controlled he should go to Vyāsavana (the grove sacred to Vyāsa). Having bathed at Manojava one would obtain the fruit of (having

donated) a thousand cows. Having gone to Madhuvanī, the place of the goddess, one with purity (of mind) and self-control should worship the deities and the manes. Being allowed by the goddess he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O descendant of Bharata, he who has bathed at the confluence of Kauśikī and Dṛṣadvatī and has his diet restrained, is absolved of all sins. Then there is the holy place called Vyāsasthalī where Vyāsa tormented by the grief due to (the death of) his son, had decided to end his life, and was again roused to action by gods, O lord of kings. Having gone (i.e. if a man goes) to that place, he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O lord of men, having reached (the holy) lake of Ṛṇānta and having offered there sesamum of the measure of a prastha (to the manes) he would, after being freed from debts, get a great success. Having bathed at the Vedītīrtha, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O king, the two holy places Aha and Sudina are difficult to reach. A man having bathed at them would obtain (i.e., go to) the Sun's heaven.

96-106. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Mṛgadhūma, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there at Rudrapada and having worshipped the noble trident-holder (i.e., Śiva), a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Vāmanaka which is well-known in the three worlds, and there bathing and having properly worshipped Vāmana, one with his soul purified of all sins, would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven. A man having bathed at Kulampuna purifies his own family. Having gone to the pool of Pavana, the excellent holy place of the Maruts and having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of Vāyu, O best of men. A man, having bathed at the pool of the immortal ones (i.e., gods), and having worshipped the lord of gods, is honoured in heaven due to the prowess of the gods. O lord of kings, having duly bathed at Śālisūrya of Śālihotra, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, O best among men. O best among the Bharatas, there is a holy place on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī (called) Śrīkuñja. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then having reached

(i.e., he should go to) Naimiṣakuñja, very difficult to reach. O lord of kings, it is said that sages of the Naimiṣa (forest) with penance as their wealth formerly set upon a pilgrimage and went to Kurukṣetra. Then an arbour was made on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī. It is a great place of the sages, which gives great joy. Having bathed in the arbour, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Kanyātīrtha, Saptasārasvata, Pṛthūdaka, Sannihiti, etc.

Nārada said :

1-11. O you pious one, then a man should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kanyātīrtha. A man having bathed at Kanyātīrtha would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent place of Brahmā. Having bathed there a man of a low caste obtains brāhmaṇahood; and a brāhmaṇa, with his soul purified, would go to the highest position. Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent Somatīrtha. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e., go to) Soma's world. Thence, O king, he should go to the holy place (called) Saptasārasvata where (lived) Maṅkaṇaka, a siddha, a brāhmaṇic sage, famous in the world. O king, it is heard that formerly Maṅkaṇaka was injured on his hand by the tip of Kuśa (i.e., darbha). From it vegetable juice flowed. The brāhmaṇic sage of a great penance seeing that vegetable juice and being full of great joy and with his eyes dilated due to amazement, danced. Then, when he danced, all that was immovable and movable, both, being deluded by his lustre, danced. O king, gods like Brahmā, and also sages with penance as their wealth, requested Mahādeva (i.e., Śiva) for the sake of the sage, "O god, please act in such a way that this (sage) would not dance." Then the god seeing the sage dancing with his mind full of joy said, with a desire for the good of the deities, to the sage :

"O pious, great sage, why are you dancing ? O best sage, what is the cause of your joy today ?"

The sage said :

12-24a. O best brāhmaṇa, O brahman, do you not see that from this wound incurred by me, an ascetic following the righteous path, vegetable juice has flowed, seeing which, I, full of great joy, have been dancing ?

Laughing at the sage overwhelmed by emotion the god said: "O brāhmaṇa, I am not amazed. Look at me." O best among men, having said so, Mahādeva, at that time, struck his thumb with the tip of his finger, O sinless one. From his wound ashes resembling snow came out. O king, seeing it, the sage, being ashamed, fell at (Śiva's) feet. (The sage said :) "I do not think there is anything superior to god Rudra. O you trident-holder, you are the refuge of the world (consisting) of the gods and the demons. You have created this universe—the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. At the end of the yuga all enter you only. Even gods cannot know you. How (then) can I ? O you sinless one, in you are seen all gods like Indra. You always are the all-in-all and you fashion and get fashioned the worlds. Through your grace the gods, having no fear from anywhere, rejoice here." Having praised Mahādeva like this, the sage bowed (before him) and said: "O Mahādeva, by your favour my penance does not perish." Then the god, with his mind pleased, said to the brāhmaṇic sage: "O brāhmaṇa, by my grace may your penance grow thousandfold. O great sage, I shall stay with you in this hermitage. For those who have bathed at (the holy place called) Saptasārasvata, nothing will be difficult to be obtained in this or in the next world. They would go to the world of Sarasvatī. There is no doubt about this."

24b-31a. Having spoken like this Mahādeva disappeared there only. Thence (a man) should go to (the holy place called) Auśanasa well-known in the three worlds, where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their wealth (dwell), and where the revered Kārtikeya lived for doing good (to his devotees), O Bhārgava. (Then there is) the holy place called Kapālamocana which destroys all sins. O best of men, having bathed

there a man is freed from all sins. Thence he should go to Agnitīrtha. O best of Bharatas, having bathed there he obtains (i.e., goes to) Agni's world, and would liberate his family. O best among Bharatas, the tīrtha of (i.e., sacred to) Viśvāmitra is there only. O great king, having bathed there, he is born in a brāhmaṇa family. With a pure and controlled mind he should go to Brahmayoni. O best of men, having bathed there he goes to Brahmā's heaven and undoubtedly purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant).

31b-40. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds as Pṛthūdaka and said to be of (i.e., sacred to) Kārtikeya. Engaged in the worship of the deities and manes, he should bathe there. O descendant of Bharata, all the bad deeds done by a man or a woman knowingly or unknowingly through (limited) human intelligence, perish by just bathing there. He (or she) obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and heaven also. Kurukṣetra is said to be holy. Sarasvatī is said to be (holier) than Kurukṣetra. The holy places are superior to Sarasvatī. Pṛthūdaka is superior to the holy places. He who intent upon muttering (the names of the lord) casts his body at Pṛthutīrtha, the best of all holy places, would not have birth and rebirth. It is sung (praised) by Sanatkumara and by the noble Vyāsa also, and also, O king, it is ordained by the Veda (that a man) should go to Pṛthūdaka. O best of men, there is no auspicious place better than Pṛthūdaka. It is sacred, pure and purifying. There is no doubt about this. Even sinful persons go to heaven after having bathed there, i.e., at Pṛthūdaka. Thus the wise say, O best of men. Just there is a holy place (called) Madhusrava, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

41-47. Thence, O best among men, he should, according to the order, go to the place of (i.e., sacred to) the goddess, i.e. to the confluence of Sarasvatī and Aruṇā, which is well-known in the world. Having fasted (there) for three nights and having bathed (there), he is absolved of (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Also he sanctifies his family up to the seventh (member). There is no doubt about this. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, there only is a holy place called Avakīrṇa, which was formerly fashioned for the sake of brāhmaṇas by Darbhin. By (practising)

vows (and undergoing) thread ceremony, fasting, a twice-born undoubtedly becomes a brāhmaṇa endowed with (i.e., knowing) rites and hymns. It is an ancient observation that a brāhmaṇa who is without any rite or (sacred) hymns would become a brāhmaṇa who has observed vows. Darbhin also brought together the four oceans. O best of men, having bathed there, a man would not have (i.e., meet with) misfortune; and he obtains the fruits of (having donated) four thousand cows.

48-49. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place (called) Śatasahasraka. (A holy place called) Sahasraka is there only. (These) two holy places are well-known in the world. A man having bathed at (these) two (holy places) would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. A gift (given here) or a fast (observed at these holy places) would be thousandfold (effective).

50-52a. From there, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (place called) Reṇukātīrtha. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. With manes and deities he should bathe there. With his soul freed from all sins, he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. With his anger subdued (i.e., not being excitable) and his senses controlled, he, having (i.e., he who has) bathed at (the holy place called) Vimocana, is completely free from sins born of receiving donations.

52b-58a. Thence, being chaste and with his senses controlled, he should go to Pañcavaṭa. Being endowed with great religious merit, he is honoured in heaven. Here, Sthāṇu (i.e., Śiva) the lord of the meditating saints having the bull for his banner, himself (resides). (Then) there is the holy place which is sacred to Varuṇa called Taijasa shining with its own lustre, where at that (i.e., old) time gods like Brahmā and others and sages with penance as their wealth, consecrated Guha (i.e., Kārtikeya) as the general (of the army of gods). O you perpetuating the Kuru family, to the east of Taijasa is Kurutīrtha. A chaste man who has controlled his senses, has his soul purified of all sins after bathing at Kurutīrtha. Being restrained and with his diet controlled he should thence go to Svargadvāra. He obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and obtains (i.e., goes to) the world of Brahmā.

58b-62a. Thence, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to the holy place (called) Anaraka. O king, having bathed there a man would not obtain (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Brahmā himself is always honoured there with gods. O best among men, with those whose origin is the highest Nārāyaṇa, he remains at the Rudravedī, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family. Having approached that goddess, he would not get (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Having gone to Mahādeva, the master of the world and the lord of Umā (who resides) there only, he is freed from all sins.

62b-68a. O you who subdue your enemies, the man having gone to Padmanābha Nārāyaṇa, shines, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O lord of men, a man who has simply bathed at the places holy to all deities, gets free from all his miseries and always shines like Śiva. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Asthipura. Having reached (that) purifying holy place, he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. O descendant of Bharata, he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. There is the (holy place called) Gaṅgāhrada, the pool, O best among the Bharatas. In that pool there are three crores of holy places. O king, a man bathing there is honoured and goes to Brahmā's world. A man having bathed in the river and having worshipped the great god (i.e., Śiva), gets the highest position and would liberate his family also.

68b-69a. Thence he should go to Sthāṇuvaṭa, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there and having stayed there for a night, he would obtain (i.e., go to) Rudra's world.

69b-73a. Then he should go to the grove of badaıīs, and then to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, where a man having fasted for three nights, eats badarī (fruits). A man who eats badarī (fruits) for twelve years and he who fasts for three nights are on par, O king. Having reached Indramārga, O king, a pilgrim is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

73b-76a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds, where there is the hermitage of Āditya (i.e., the Sun) who, the magnanimous one, is the mass of lustre. A man having bathed there and worshipped the Sun, goes to the Sun's heaven, and would also liberate his

family. O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a man bathing at the Somatīrtha undoudtedly obtains (i.e., goes to) Soma's world.

76b-80a. O you pious one, O king, a man should thence go to the auspicious, holy place of Dadhīci, which is purifying and which is well-known in the world, where Sarasvatī, the treasure of penance, obtained perfection. Having bathed at that holy place, a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice. There is no doubt that he also has a mind (to reach) goddess Sarasvatī. Being controlled and chaste and devoutly observing a fast he should go to Kanyāśrama, and having stayed there for three nights he would obtain a hundred daughters and he goes to Brahmā's world.

80b-85. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the holy place (called) Sannihiti where gods like Brahmā and sages having penance as their treasure, endowed with great merit, gather every month. Having bathed at Sannihiti when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu (i.e., on the day of solar eclipse), he thereby gets (the fruit of) a hundred horse sacrifices and desired objects eternally. O lord of men, whichever holy places there are on the earth or in the sky, and also wells and brāhmaṇas and auspicious abodes, all those, O king, undoubtedly will come (i.e., come) on the new moon day in every month to Sannihiti, O best among men. (The holy place) is well-known on the earth as Sannihiti because of the presence of holy places (there). Having bathed and drunk (water) there, a man is honoured in heaven.

86-89a. (Now) listen to the meritorious fruit of the Śrāddha that a man performs on a new moon day or when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu. A man who has just bathed there and who performs a śrāddha (there) obtains the fruit of a thousand horse sacrifices properly performed. There is no doubt that whatever bad deed of (i.e., is done by) a woman or a man, all that perishes merely by bathing (there). He goes to Brahmā's world in a car having lotus-like colour.

89b-91. Then with (the announcement of) his name he should (salute) Macakruka. O best of Bharatas, the pool of Gaṅgā is there only. O you pious one, a man being restrained and calm should bathe there. (Such) a man obtains the fruit of

Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices). On the earth Naimiṣa is holy and Puṣkara in the sky.

92-96. In the three worlds Kurukṣetra is distinguished. Even the particles of dust greatly shaken by wind take even a sinful person to the best position (i.e., salvation). Those who live in Kurukṣetra on the northern (bank) of Sarasvatī and to the south of (the holy place called) Sarasvatī, live in heaven. Even by just uttering these words : "I shall go to kurukṣetra; I shall stay at Kurukṣetra", a man is honoured in heaven. O king, auspicious Kurukṣetra resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages, is at Brahmavedī. Those who live there, are not to be grieved over. The five on the boundary of Kurukṣetra—the distance between Taraṇḍa and Kāraṇḍaka, between the pools of (i.e., sacred to) Paraśurāma and Macakruka—are called the Uttaravedi of the Grandsire.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Dharmatīrtha, Śākambharī, Rathāvartta, etc.

Nārada said :

1-3a. O pious one, thence he should go to the ancient (holy place called) Dharmatīrtha where formerly the illustrious Dharma practised excellent penance. He fashioned that holy place known by his name. O king, a religious and tranquil man having bathed there purifies his family up to the seventh (generation). There is no doubt about it.

3b-4. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kalāpavana. Having gone there with a great difficulty and being calm and having bathed there he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

5-10. Thence, O king, a man should go to Saugandhika grove where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their treasure, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, kinnaras with great serpents (dwell). As soon as he enters the grove, he is free from all sins. From there the very auspicious, excellent river, greatest

among the rivers, i.e., Sarasvatī is known as Plakṣādevī, O king. He should bathe there in the water flowing out from a hillock. Having worshipped the manes and deities there, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. There is a holy place called Īśānādhyuṣita which is very difficult to reach. It is certain that the water that goes to it from the hillock is six times (more). O best of men, having bathed there, a man gets (the fruit of having donated) a thousand tawny cows and (of) a horse sacrifice. The ancient people have observed this.

11-13a. O best of men, having gone to Sugandhā, Śatakumbha, and Pañcayajña, a man is honoured in heaven, O descendent of Bharata. Then having reached the holy place Triśūlapatra, difficult to reach, he should bathe there and be engaged in worshipping manes and deities. There is no doubt that after casting his body he obtains the headship of the attendants of Śiva.

13b-18. Then he should go to Rājagṛha, the place of the goddess, which is very difficult to reach. She is known as Śākambharī, and is famous in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, for a thousand divine years she subsisted on vegetables. The sages, treasures of penance, and the devotees of that goddess, every month went there, O king. O descendant of Bharata, she welcomed them with (i.e., by offering them) vegetables. Therefore she is famous as Śākambharī. Having reached (the holy place of) Śākambharī, he being chaste and tranquil (should) stay there for three nights and being controlled and pure, should eat vegetables. O descendant of Bharata, by the desire of the goddess, the fruit of that is the same as that of duly eating vegetables for twelve years.

19-22. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Suvarṇākhya, well-known in the three worlds, where formerly Kṛṣna propitiated Rudra for his favour and obtained (from him) many boons difficult to be obtained even by gods; and, O descendant of Bharata, was thus told by Tripura's destroyer pleased with him: "O Kṛṣṇa, in the world you will be a dearer soul (i.e., people will love you more than their own soul) and undoubtedly the entire world will be your mouth." O lord of kings, having gone there and having worshipped the bull-bannered god, he

obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and the headship of Śiva's attendants.

23-26. Having stayed there for three nights, a man should go to Umāvatī from there. There is no doubt that he gets the objects desired by his mind. To the southern half of (the holy place of) the goddess, there is (the holy place called) Rathāvartta, O king. Having reached there, O pious one, a man having faith and with his senses controlled goes to the highest position (i.e., salvation) by the grace of Mahādeva. O best of the Bharatas, he should proceed after turning to the right to (the holy place called) Dharā which destroys all sins, O you highly intelligent one. O king, having bathed there, a man is never unhappy.

27-31a. Then, O best of men, having saluted the great mountain, he should go to Gaṅgādvāra, which is undoubtedly equal to the gate to heaven. Being calm he should bathe there at the Koṭitīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains (i.e. reaches) Puṇḍarīka, and would liberate his own family. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. At Saptagaṅga, Trigaṅga and Śakrāvartta he should duly offer oblations to deities and manes. (By doing this) he is honoured in the world of the meritorious. Then, a man having bathed at Kanakhala and having fasted for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

31b-33. Then a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Kapilāvaṭa, O king. A man by staying there for a night obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O best among the Kurus, (then there is) the holy place of the magnanimous Kapila, the king of Nāgas. O lord of kings, it is well-known in all the worlds. O king, a man should bathe there at the Nāgatīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand tawny cows.

34. Thence a man should go to Lalitaka, the excellent holy place of Śantanu. O king, having bathed there a man would not meet with disaster.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

Kālindītīrtha : *Efficacy of Yamunā*

Nārada said :

1-18. O lord of kings, then a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kālindītīrtha. O king, having bathed there one does not meet with misfortune. O best among men, one obtains that fruit (by bathing) in Yamunā which he gets (by bathing) at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Brahmāvartta, Pṛthūdaka, Avimukta, Suvarṇākhya. Those in whose heart there is a great attachment for heavenly pleasures or who desire (long) life, good health, wealth, handsomeness, youth and virtues, should not give up the water of Yamunā. (These things can be had) especially by a bath in Yamunā, O best one. Those who are afraid of hell etc. and those who have a dread of poverty, should with all efforts take a bath in Yamunā. O Yudhiṣṭhira, except the water of Yamunā there is nothing else for (i.e., which is capable of) washing the mud of poverty, sins, misfortune. Deeds done without faith give half (i.e., a partial) fruit. But a bath in Yamunā gives the entire fruit. O king, he who with or without a desire bathes in the water of Yamunā, does not see (i.e., experience) miseries here (i.e., in this world) or in the next world. As the moon wanes and waxes in the two fortnights, in the same way by bathing in Yamunā sin perishes and religious merit increases. As in the ocean various gems are easily obtained, so (long) life, wealth, wife, riches are possible for (i.e. are obtained by) him. As the desire-yielding cow gives the desired object, or as the desire-yielding gem gives whatever is thought of, in the same way a bath in Yamunā gives all (the objects of) desire. In Kṛtayuga penance was great knowledge; in Tretāyuga sacrifice (was important); in Dvāparayuga and Kaliyuga giving (gifts) is (fruitful). (But) Yamunā is always auspicious. O king, for all the castes and for all the stages of life a bath in (the water) of Yamunā indeed showers piety in streams. In this country (called) Bhārata, especially (named) as the land of religious rites, the life of men not bathing in Yamunā is said to be fruitless. As on the new moon day there is no affluence in the orb of the moon in the sky, in the same way no act shines (i.e., is effective)

without a bath in Yamunā. Hari or Keśava (i.e., Viṣṇu) is not so much pleased by means of vows, gifts or penance as he is pleased by means of just a bath in Yamunā. There is no lustre like that of the sun. In the same way there is nothing like a bath in Yamunā. Equally potent are the sacrificial rites. For pleasing Vāsudeva, for removing all sins and for obtaining (i.e., going to) heaven men should bathe in Yamunā.

19-25. What is the use of protecting the very well nourished and strong body which is unstable without having a bath in Yamunā ? The body is a column of bones, a union of sinews, filled with flesh and blood, put together with skin and having a foul smell, full of urine and feces, pervaded with old age, grief and misery, a weak abode of diseases, the source of attachment, transitory, and the resort of all blemishes, having the affliction of the sin of other's obligations (*paropakārapāpārtiparadroha*?), deceiving others, and jealous of others; (it is) greedy, wicked, cruel, ungrateful and momentary also. It is pityless, difficult to be arrested, wicked and defiled by the disorder of the three humours of the body.[1] (It is) impure, tormenting, foul-smelling, and deluded by the three kinds of miseries.[2] It is by nature engaged in impiety; it is full of a hundred thirsts (i.e., desires); it remains at the door of hell in the form of passion, anger and great greed. It is full of worms, ordure, ashes etc., useful in the end (*pariṇāmaguṇāvaham*?). Such a body is useless without a bath in Yamunā.

26-33. Those who are without a bath in Yamunā are born to die only like the bubbles on water or mock eggs among birds. A brāhmaṇa not devoted to Viṣṇu is doomed; a śrāddha without the (offering of) piṇḍas is worthless; a kṣatriya not friendly with a brāhmaṇa is miserable; a family without good practices is condemned. Good conduct is doomed with (i.e., due to) hypocrisy. Penance is worthless due to anger. Unstable knowledge is worthless. Sacred knowledge is doomed due to negligence. A woman is ruined due to her devotion to (someone) else (but her husband). A celibate is ruined by a woman. A sacrifice is worth-

1. Doṣatraya : Disorder of the three humours of the body, viz. wind, bile, and phlegm.

2. Tāpatraya : The three kind of miseries which human beings have to suffer in this world, viz. Ādhyātmika (caused by the mind), Ādhibhautika (caused by animals), and Ādhidaivika (caused by fate).

less when the fire is not blazing. Devotion with deceit is worthless. A maiden having a dependent is doomed. Cooking for oneself (alone) is worthless. Dependence on śūdra's food is useless. The wealth of a miser is doomed. Learning without study is useless. Contradictory advice is lost. A sacred place (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) living is worthless. False words are worthless; so also those that are full of slander. A deliberation going to six ears (i.e., to a third person) is doomed. Muttering (the names of a deity) without concentration is worthless. Giving gifts to a brāhmaṇa who is not learned is worthless. Atheists are doomed. All that is done for (obtaining) the other world without faith is worthless.

34-46. O king, as the life of the poor people is worthless in this world, in the same way their life is useless without a bath in Kālindī. All minor and major sins are reduced to ashes by taking a bath in Yamunā, O king. When a man has gone to Yamunā, all sins tremble. Best men, if they bathe in the water of Yamunā, shine like fires. As the moon is free from clouds, they are free from all sins. As fire burns the sacred fuel, in the same way a bath there would burn soft or harsh, small or big sin committed by speech, mind or physical acts. O best king, the sin committed through negligence or deliberately or unknowingly would perish just on bathing in Yamunā. The sinless ones go to heaven, and the greatest sinners become pure. No doubt should be raised about the bath in the water of Yamunā. O king, all are entitled to bathing here and to devotion to Viṣṇu. Goddess Yamunā always destroys the sins of all. This alone is a great hymn; this is a great penance. The excellent bath in Yamunā is a great expiation. Men have a mind to bathe in Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) due to the practice in other (i.e., previous) existencies as, O king, cleverness in mataphysical knowledge is due to a life-long practice. The bath in Yamunā is efficacious in washing the smearing of the mud of the worldly existence. It is (most) purifying among the purifiers and is excellent. O king, those who have bathed there (i.e., in Yamunā) which gives (i.e., satisfies) all desires, enjoy auspicious pleasures resembling the planets like the sun and the moon. Yamunā, when in contact with (i.e.,

flowing by) Mathurā is said to be giving salvation. Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) increases (a man's) religious merit.

47-51. At other places Yamunā is holy and removes great sins, (but) in contact with Mathurā the deity (i.e., Yamunā) gives (creates in one's mind) devotion for Viṣṇu. If a man full of devotion bathes in Kālindī, he lives near Viṣṇu for a crore of thousand kalpas. (Even) a man devoid of knowledge indeed attains salvation. His manes are pleased; and being pleased they live in heaven for hundreds of kalpas. O king, for men who drink the holy water of Yamunā what is the use of taking a thousand collections of the five products of a cow ? What is also the use of resorting to a crore of thousands of sacred places ? Giving (gifts) and (performing) a sacrifice there would become a crorefold effective.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Hemakuṇḍala and His Two Sons

Nārada said:

1-13. O king, now I shall tell you an old history (i.e., an account). In Kṛtayuga, in the excellent city of Niṣadha, there lived a merchant resembling Kubera and named Hemakuṇḍala. He was of a high descent, of good deeds, a worshipper of deities, brāhmaṇas and fire. He practised agriculture and trade and purchased and sold various (things). He was eagerly engaged in rearing cows, horses and buffaloes etc. He always sold milk, curds, buttermilk, cowdung, grass, wood, fruits, roots, salt, ginger, long pepper, grains, vegetables, oils, garments of various kinds, metals, sugar and molasses. By these and various other means the merchant always earned eight crores of (coins of) gold. Thus he who had great wealth became grey up to his ears. Then thinking in his mind about the transitoriness of the worldly existence, he did acts of piety with (i.e., by spending) the sixth part of that wealth. He fashioned the temple of Viṣṇu and also the abode of Śiva. He got dug a tank, big and resembling an ocean.

He also constructed many wells and lakes in many ways. According to his capacity he also put up the grove of (the trees like) vaṭa, aśvattha, mango, kaṅkola, jambu, nimba etc., and also a charming garden. He gave food and drink from sunrise to sunset. In all the four directions outside the city he set up stalls where travellers could drink water. That religious-minded one, always engaged in giving gifts, gave all (kinds of) presents that were well-known in the Purāṇas. He also underwent an expiation for the sins committed during his life (time). He was always engrossed in worshipping deities and guests.

14-27a. When he was living like this two sons were born to him, O king. Their names were well-known as Śrīkuṇḍala and Vikuṇḍala. Having put the responsibility of (managing the affairs of) the house on their heads (i.e., on their shoulders) he went to a forest for (practising) penance. Having propitiated there that great god, the lord who grants boons, he with his body afflicted with penance and with his mind always set upon Vāsudeva (i.e., Viṣṇu), reached Viṣṇu's heaven, reaching which a man does not regret. O king, both his sons were full of great pride, young, handsome, proud of their wealth. Their character was bad; they were addicted to bad habits; they did not observe religious rites; they did not obey the words of their mother and (other) elderly persons. They had gone astray; they were wicked; they refused (to recognize) their father's friends. They were engaged in (doing) impious acts; they were wicked; and cohabited with the wives of others. They were engaged in singing and instrumental music, had diversions like playing upon the lute and flute. They were in the company of hundreds of harlots. They sang (songs). (Thus) they then lived. They were surrounded by flatterers. They were skilful (in enjoying) with beautiful women. They put on good dresses; they wore charming garments; they were adorned with pleasing sandal (-paste). They put on fragrant garlands, and the marks of musk. They richly adorned themselves with various ornaments. They put on pearl-necklaces. Here and there they sported with hosts af elephants, horses and chariots. They indulged in drinking wine; they were infatuated by sexual union with the wives of others. They wasted their father's money. They gave (i.e., squandered) a lakh (of coins). Always intent upon enjoyment of pleasures they remained in their own house. In this way they used

that wealth by spending it in improper ways. They gave that wealth to unworthy recipients (like) harlots, rogues, actors, wrestlers, singers and bards, like seed sown in a saline land. They did not give it to worthy recipients, nor did they offer it into the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. They did not worship Viṣṇu, the sustainer of the creatures, destroying all sins.

27b-35. The wealth of both of them was soon exhausted. Then they became very unhappy and were reduced to great poverty. They were lamenting; they were perplexed; they were oppressed with hunger, affliction and grief. When they remained in home, there was nothing that they (could) eat. Due to want of wealth, they, not trusted by their kinsmen, relatives, servants and dependents in that city, were deserted. O king, then they started stealing (things) in that city. Afraid of the king and the people, they then went out of their city. Troubled by all they lived in a forest. The two fools always killed with sharp arrows rubbed with poison many birds, boars, deer and rohita (a species of deer), hares, porcupines, iguanas, and many other beasts of prey. The two very strong ones always enjoyed in the company of bhilas. O you subduer of your enemies, thus they ate fleshy food, forbidden food. Some time one reached a mountain; the other one went to a forest. The elder one was killed by a tiger; the younger one was bitten by a snake. Thus, O king, one day the most sinful ones died.

36-41. Then they were bound by the wicked messengers of Yama and were taken to Yama's abode. Going there, all the messengers spoke (about) both of them to Yama: "O Dharmarāja, these two men have been brought here by your order. Give orders to (us) your servants. (Please) be favourable (and tell us) what we should do." Having spoken to Citragupta, Yama then spoke to the messengers: "O brave ones, one should be taken to the hell and tortured. The other one should be placed in heaven where there are excellent enjoyments." Having heard that order of Yama, the prompt messengers threw the elder one into the terrible Raurava (hell), O king. A certain excellent messenger among them said (these) sweet words: "O Vikuṇḍala, come with me. I shall give you (i.e., lead you to) heaven. Enjoy (there) very divine pleasures which you have earned by means of your deeds."

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

Vikuṇḍala's Dialogue with the Devadūta

Nārada said:

1. Then he (i.e., Vikuṇḍala) pleased in his mind, entertaining a doubt in his heart, and very much amazed and thinking in his mind (i.e., to himself), asked the messenger on the way (to heaven): "For what reason am I having (this) fruit?"

Vikuṇḍala said:

2. O best messenger, I am asking you (to clarify) an important doubt. We two were born in the same family. Also we have done similar deeds.

3-4. We equally met with a miserable death, and also saw Yama in the same way. How is it that my elder brother who did the same deeds as I, was thrown in hell? And how did I obtain heaven? (Please) remove (this) doubt of mine. O divine messenger, I see no reason why I should be in heaven.

The divine messenger said:

5-9. Mother, father, son, wife, sister, brother are relative to one's birth and for the enjoyment (of the fruit) of his deeds. They are like a gathering of birds on the same tree. A man always attains the fruit of that act which he wilfully did. I am telling you the truth through affection (for you). Men get the good or bad (fruit of) the acts they have done at different times, O vaiśya. One performs acts and he (alone) obtains its fruit. O vaiśya, someone does not enjoy or suffer for the acts of someone else. Your brother fell into the hell due to his very fierce sins. O pious one, because of your piety you will obtain heaven eternally.

Vikuṇḍala said:

10-11. O messenger, from my childhood, my mind was interested in sinful deeds and not in pious deeds. I have committed wicked deeds in this existence. O divine messenger, I do not know my (i.e., if I have done) good deed. If you know the pious acts that I have done, then be kind and tell them to me.

The divine messenger said:

12-20a. O vaiśya, listen to the religious merit that you have earned. I know it all. You do not know it quite positively. There was a brāhmaṇa (named) Sumitra who was Harimitra's son and who had mastered the Vedas. His auspicious hermitage was on the right bank of Yamunā. O best of vaiśyas, in the forest you formed friendship with him; and due to his contact, you bathed for two Māgha months in the auspicious water of Yamunā which removes all sins. O lord of vaiśyas, by bathing for one month at that holy place named Pāpapraṇāśana which is well-known in the world, you were freed from all your sins. Due to the merit (collected by bathing) during the second month of Māgha you obtained heaven, O sinless one. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit always rejoice in the heaven. In the hells your brother (will suffer from) great tortures. He would be cut off with blades of swords; he would be rent with hammers; he would be pounded on slabs, and roasted in burning charcoals.

Hearing the words of the messenger and being afflicted by his brother's distress, he with his whole body covered with bristling hair and being miserable and endowed with modesty said sweet and clever words to the divine messenger:

20b-22. "O good one, friendship with the good even (over the distance) of seven steps gives good fruit. Realising (our) friendship, please oblige me. I, therefore, desire to hear (everything from you). I look upon you as omniscient. Be pleased and tell me by (doing) which deed men do not see Yama's world, and by (doing) which they go to hell."

The divine messenger said:

23-24. O vaiśya, you have asked well. Now your sins have perished. In pure hearts of men a thought for (obtaining) bliss, for final emancipation is produced. Though, due to my being in the service of someone else I have no time (to explain these things), yet through my affection for you I shall explain them according to my intellectual capacity.

25-29. Those (who) never harm others by (physical) deeds, by thought and speech, in whatever condition they may be, do not go to Yama's abode. Men who harm (other) creatures do

not go to heaven even by (i.e., in spite of) their (reciting) Vedas, (giving) gifts, (practising) austerities or (performing) sacrifices. Harmlessness is (a) great (form of) piety. Harmlessness alone is a great penance. Harmlessness is a great gift. This is what the sages always say. Those men who are kind look upon mosquitoes, creeping animals, gad-flies, lice and men as on themselves. These men do not (get roasted) in heated charcoals, are not (fixed) on iron-stakes, are not stupefied, are not (thrown into) the river of corpses, do not meet with misery (imposed) by Yama.

30-34. Those who kill beings moving in water or on the ground here (i.e., on the earth) for their livelihood, get bound by Yama's cord and come to a miserable state. There they eat dog's flesh, drink pus and blood, and bitten by insects with their mouths (turned) down sink in the mud of marrow. Eating one another they live there for many kalpas. Having gone to (i.e., been born in) the species of insects, they for a long time become immobile. Then the cruel ones go to (i.e., are born in) hundreds of species of birds. Then they are born blind, or squint-eyed, deformed or lame. They are born poor, or bereft of a limb and such men kill (other) creatures.

35-41. Therefore, O vaiśya, a pious man longing for happiness in both the worlds—this one and the other one—should not do it (i.e., harm others) by means of physical (deeds) or thoughts or by words. Those who harm creatures do not obtain happiness in both the worlds. Those who do not harm creatures are afraid of nothing. As rivers flowing in a crooked way or straight enter the ocean, similarly all pious acts thoroughly enter harmlessness. O best of vaiśyas, he who has granted fearlessness to beings, has bathed at all holy places and is prepared for a sacrifice. O vaiśya, those who in this world follow the injunctions of the sacred texts, mixing up what is pious and what is impious, do not go to Yama's abode. A celibate, a householder, a hermit and an ascetic engaged in their own duties—all they live in heaven. All men of all castes and stages of life, with their senses controlled and behaving as (already) told, go eternally to heaven.

42-52a. Those who are engaged in performing sacrifices, digging wells and performing other acts of charity, those who are engaged in (performing) the five sacrifices, and those who are always full of compassion, never see Yama's abode. Those

brāhmaṇas who have turned away from objects of sense, who are competent and are teachers of the Vedas, who are always engaged in worshipping fire, go to heaven. The Sun is the path (destination) of those whose faces are not sad, who are brave (though) surrounded by enemies, who die in battles. O vaiśya, those who cast their life while protecting a helpless woman, a brāhmaṇa who has sought their refuge, do not fall from heaven. O vaiśya, those who always protect the lame, the blind, the young, the old, the sick, the helpless and the poor, always rejoice in heaven. Those who, on seeing a cow plunged in mud or a brāhmaṇa sinking in disease, emancipate them, get the world of those who perform the horse sacrifice. Those (men) who give a morsel (of grass) to a cow, who always nurse cows, who do not mount upon a cow's back, live in heaven. Those men who have just made (i.e., dug) a ditch where (from) a cow (having drunk water) is free from thirst, go (straight) to heaven without even seeing Yama's world. Those brāhmaṇas who are always engaged in worshipping fire, deities, preceptors and brāhmaṇas, go to heaven. There is no end to piety (when) wells, tanks, lakes etc. (are constructed and) where animals living on land or in water drink (water) as they like. And even the wise describe him as one who is always intent upon giving gifts.

52b-59a. O best among vaiśyas, as the creatures drink profuse water, he (gets) eternal heaven (i.e., secures an eternal place in heaven) due to his belief in piety. Water is the (very) life of beings, and vitality depends upon water. Even those men who are sinners, are purified by taking a bath everyday. O vaiśya, a bath in the morning would remove external and internal impurity. A man, with his sins removed by bathing in the morning, would not go to hell. That man who eats without bathing is always an eater of filth. The manes and deities turn away from the man who does not bathe. A man without a bath is a sinner; a man without a bath is impure. A man who does not bathe suffers in hell and is born among male insects etc. Those again who bathe in a stream on a parvan day, never go to hell, nor are they born in mean species. Bad dreams and vicious thoughts always become fruitless in the case of men who purify themselves by taking a bath in the morning, O best among the vaiśyas.

59b-62. Men, by offering sesamum seeds or vessels full of sesamum seeds or sesamum seeds (of the measure) of a prastha, never go to the land of the lord of the dead (i.e., Yama). O Vikuṇḍala, having given land, gold, a cow and the sixteen (types of) gifts and having (as a result of these gifts) gone (to heaven), men do not return from heaven. A wise man, having bathed on auspicious days and on Vyatīpāta and Saṁkrama (days), and having given something (on these) days never sinks in disaster. Donors never tread on the fearful hellish path. In this world they are not born in a poor family.

63-68. A man who is truthful, who always observes a vow of silence, who speaks agreeably, who is not given to anger, who is of a good conduct, who does not talk much, who is free from jealousy, who is always full of generosity, who is always full of pity for beings, who always preserves (i.e., keeps to himself) the weak points of others, who talks (only) about the virtues of others, who even mentally does not snatch the wealth, even of the measure of a blade of grass, of others—all these, O best of vaiśyas, do not experience the agony of hell. A man who blames others and who is heretical, is worse than even sinners. He is cooked in the hell till the destruction of the beings (i.e., till the deluge). A man who speaks harsh words, should be looked upon as having come from hell. There is no doubt, O best among the vaiśyas, that such a man meets with misery. An ungrateful man does not have expiation by (visiting) holy places or (practising) austerities. The man suffers from a terrible agony in hell for a long time.

69-71. That man who having controlled his senses and diet bathes at the holy places which are there on the earth, does not go to Yama's abode. A man should not commit a sin at a holy place and should not earn his livelihood at a holy place. Acceptance of gifts at a holy place should be renounced (i.e., gifts should not be accepted at a holy place). So also giving up one's religion for the sake of material gain should be avoided at a holy place. A sin committed at a holy place, also gifts received at a holy place do not give enjoyment. All this does not give enjoyment at a holy place. Why should one go to hell (by doing these things at a holy place)?

72-77. A man who has once (only) bathed in Gaṅgā, and is purified by the water of Gaṅgā, does not go to hell, even though he has committed a heap of sins. We have heard that vows, gifts, penance, sacrifices and other pious acts are not equal to the bath with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. O vaiśya, that mean man who says that Gaṅgā is like other holy places, goes to a great, terrible hell. The element of the water (of Gaṅgā) oozes piety; it has dropped from the feet of Viṣṇu. That water of Gaṅgā which is held by Śiva on his head, is Brahman itself which is qualityless and which is beyond Prakṛti. There is no doubt about this. What would equal it within the range of the universe? A man who would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even at a distance of hundreds of yojanas, does not go to hell. What can be equal to her? The act giving (i.e., taking one to) hell cannot be instantly burnt by any other (means than the water of Gaṅgā).

78. O vaiśya, that man who though fit to accept gift does not accept it, shines in the form of a star in the sky.

79 ab. Those who take out a cow from mud, who take care of the sick, and who die in a cattleshed, (become) stars in the sky.

79c-83. Those who are wholly devoted to prāṇāyāma (i.e., restraining their breath) during the mental recitation of the names of a deity, get their sins destroyed, even though they are sinners, by them (i.e., prāṇāyāmas) only, and do not see Yama's world. O vaiśya, the sixteen prāṇāyāmas evidently purify even the killer of a brāhmaṇa when practised day after day. Prāṇāyāma is equal to austerities that are practised or vows and restraints that are observed or to a thousand cows given as a gift. Prāṇāyāma is equal to (the fruit of) a drop of water taken on the tip of a Kuśa, which a man would drink month after month for a full hundred years. A man reduces to ashes within a moment all the sin which is great or small by means of prāṇāyāma.

84-86. O best of men, those excellent men who look upon another's wife as their mother, never go to (i.e., experience) agony of (i.e., given by) Yama. O vaiśya, he who does not enjoy another's wife even mentally, is with the two worlds (i.e., enjoys both of them). He has supported the earth. Therefore,

those who are endowed with piety, should give up enjoying another's wife. (Enjoying) another's wife leads to twentyone hells.[1]

87. O best of the vaiśyas, those in whose minds desire for (enjoying) other's wives does not arise go to the world of gods, and not to Yama.

88. He who is not conquered by anger, (even though) causes of anger are present, must be looked upon as one who has conquered heaven and as a wrathless man on the earth.

89-90. A son who adores his mother and father like deities (even) before they have reached old age does not go to Yama. O best of vaiśyas, men who adore their preceptor with greater devotion than their father, become guests (i.e., are honoured as guests) in Brahmā's world.

91-92. And here women are blessed who guard their character. By spoiling their character women go to the very terrible world of Yama. By avoiding the company of the wicked women should always preserve their character; for, O vaiśya, there is no doubt that by means of (the preservation of) their character women get (i.e., reach) the best heaven.

93. Misery is enjoined for him who performs a śūdra's domestic sacrifice and does what is prohibited; and he obtains a position in hell.

94-97. Those, who ponder over sacred texts, who are engrossed in Vedic studies, who narrate and recite Purāṇas, who expound the smṛtis (i.e., codes of law), who propound the laws of good conduct, who are adept in the Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads), have sustained this world. With their sins destroyed by the virtue of that particular study, all of them go to Brahmā's world where there is no delusion. Even Vedas adore him who gives knowledge arising out of the sacred Vedic texts to an ignorant person, and (who therefore) cuts off the bond of mundane existence.

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1. Narakān Ekaviṁśati—The twentyone hells according to the *Manusmṛti* (IV. 88-90) are as follows :

Tāmisra, Andhatāmisra, Mahāraurava, Raurava, Kālasūtra, Mahānaraka, Saṁjīvana, Mahāvīci, Tapana, Sampratāpana, Saṁhāta, Sakākola, Kuḍmala, Pratimūrtika, Lohaśaṅku, Ṛjīṣa, Panthāna, Śālmalī, Vaitaraṇī, Asipatravana, Lohadāraka.

98-119. O best vaiśya, listen to this wonderful secret which is approved by Dharmarāja and which gives nectar to all the worlds. The devotees of Viṣṇu do not see Yama or Yama's world or beings of a horrible appearance. I have told the truth, (and) the truth (only). The brother of Yamunā (i.e., Yama) has always and repeatedly told us: "You have to spare the devotees of Viṣṇu; they should not come within my power. Those beings who (even) once (or) occasionally remember Viṣṇu with all the heaps of their sins destroyed, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. You should also always spare a man who adores Viṣṇu, even though he is of a bad conduct or a sinner who is devoted to good practices. You should also spare the man at whose house a devotee of Viṣṇu eats or those (men) who are in the company of a devotee of Viṣṇu, (since) their sins are destroyed due to his company." O vaiśya, the god holding the (chastising) rod, always instructs us like this. Therefore, the devotees of Viṣṇu never go to the capital city of Yama. O best among the vaiśyas, for crossing the ocean of hell there is no other means than devotion to Viṣṇu for the most sinful persons. O vaiśya, a man should not investigate an outcast who is a devotee of Viṣṇu. A devotee of Viṣṇu, even if he is an outcast, purifies the three worlds. Thus, for fully removing the dirt of sins men should repeat the virtues, acts and names of the lord, since, even the sinner Ajāmila crying 'O son Nārāyaṇa' while dying, obtained salvation. When men gladly worship Viṣṇu, all those (ancestors of them) who have sunk in hell for a long time and the two families (i.e., of the father and of the mother) go to heaven. O vaiśya, those who are servants of a Viṣṇu's devotee and who eat food from a Viṣṇu's devotee, go without being perplexed to the position of (the followers of Viṣṇu), the enjoyers of sacrifices. A man should with effort desire food from a Viṣṇu's devotee for purification from all sins. In its absence he should drink water. (Even) if a man muttering the hymn ('Govinda...') dies anywhere, he does not see Yama, nor do we see him. He should fully recite the hymn consisting of twelve syllables with the mudrās (i.e., particular positions of the fingers) with meditation, with (the name of) the sage, metre and deity, with (i.e., after) initiation and in the proper manner. On seeing the best men who mutter the best hymn consisting of eight syllables, a

killer of a brāhmaṇa would be purified and himself shines like Viṣṇu. Those men, being the possessors of conches and discs (i.e., resembling Viṣṇu), entering Brahma, live in the form of Viṣṇu in the heaven of Viṣṇu. Men having properly worshipped Viṣṇu (residing) in the heart, in the sun, in water or on the altar of the idol, reach Viṣṇu's position. Or, those who desire salvation, should always worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma (stone), a gem, or a disc made of steel particles; for, O vaiśya, it is the abode of Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which gives all religious merit and which gives salvation to all. He who would worship Viṣṇu on a disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has everyday performed a thousand Rājasūya sacrifices. The Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads) always look upon Viṣṇu, as Brahman, the Supreme Spirit. By worshipping the śālagrāma stone men would obtain his favour.

120-123. As the fire residing in a large wood shines at the place of sacrifice, in the same way the all-pervading Viṣṇu shines in the śālagrāma. O vaiśya, worshippers of śālagrāma, even though they are of a sinful conduct or are not entitled to (religious) rites, do not certainly go to Yama's abode. Viṣṇu does not as much rejoice with Lakṣmī or in his own city, as he always rejoices in the disc on the śālagrāma stone. He, who has worshipped Viṣṇu on the disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has performed agnihotra or given the earth with the ocean (as a gift).

124-146a. I shall tell you of the religious merit of him who has duly worshipped the twelve stones produced from śālagrāma rock. That (merit) which would be (obtained) by worshipping with golden lotuses twelve crores of Phalluses twelve times would be (obtained) in a day only (by worshipping a śālagrāma). He who would devoutly worship a hundred śālagrāma stones, would, after living with Viṣṇu, be born as a sovereign emperor here (i.e., on the earth). A mean man pervaded by passions, anger or greed also goes to Viṣṇu's heaven by worshipping a śālagrāma stone. The man who with joy would worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma stone, does not fall from heaven till deluge. O vaiśya, men obtain salvation (merely) by worshipping a śālagrāma stone without (visiting) holy places, without (giving) gifts, and without (performing) sacrifices or without (having

any) thought (about it). O vaiśya, the worshipper of a śālagrāma stone, even though he is a sinner, does not go to hell, is (not conceived) in a womb, is not born in a species of birds, or insects, and also he who, conversant with the rite of initiation, its procedure and hymn, would offer an oblation to the disc (does not go to hell). All rivers—Gaṅgā, Godāvarī and Revā which give salvation, abide in the water of śālagrāma. A man who being highly devoted worships in Kaliyuga a śālagrāma by means of various offerings of eatables, flowers, incense, lights, smearings, songs, musical instruments, hymns, rejoices in the company of Viṣṇu for a thousand crores of kalpas. That fruit which is seen (to be obtained) by worshipping and extolling crores of phalluses, is had (by the worship) of a śālagrāma (just) for a day. Men devoid of reasoning on worshipping a phallus made of śālagrāma stone (even) once, go to (i.e., obtain) salvation. Gods, deities, yakṣas and the fourteen worlds live there where Viṣṇu in the form of the śālagrāma stone lives. The manes of the man who has faith in the śālagrāma stone remain pleased in heaven for a hundred kalpas. What is the use of drinking thousand (times) the five products of cow for the men who everyday drink the water from a śālagrāma stone? So also what is the use of visiting thousands of crores of holy places, if a man would drink the auspicious water from the śālagrāma stone? Where there is a śālagrāma stone, there (within a distance of) three yojanas all gifts (given) and sacrifices (performed) would be a crorefold effective. A man devoted to Viṣṇu, who would drink water equal to (i.e., of the measure of) a drop from the śālagrāma stone, would never again drink mother's milk (i.e., would not be born). Even an insect which dies within the distance of a krośa in the vinicity of a śālagrāma goes to the excellent world of Viṣṇu. He who gives the excellent gift, viz. a disc of the śālagrāma stone, has given the globe along with mountains, groves and forests. A man who would beget money (by trading in) the śālagrāma stone, a seller (of the stone) and one who approves of (such sale), and he who takes delight in testing (the stone)—all these go to hell (and live there) till deluge. Therefore, O vaiśya, a man should avoid the purchase or sale of the disc.

146b-151a. O vaiśya, what is the use of prolixity? A man who is afraid of sins, should always do the mental recitation of

the name of Vāsudeva, i.e., Viṣṇu, which removes all sins. A man obtains that fruit by saluting Garuḍa-bannered (Viṣṇu), which he, with his senses controlled, obtains by practising severe penance in a forest. A man, even after having committed, (due to) being full of delusion, many sins, goes to Viṣṇu who removes all sins, (and) not to hell. By reciting the names of Viṣṇu a man obtains (the fruit of having visited) all those holy places and sacred abodes. Those devoted ones who resort to god Viṣṇu, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow), do not reside in the same world as Yama, and would not have a hell as their abode.

151b-152a. O vaiśya, one who is a devotee of Viṣṇu and who censures Śiva would not obtain (i.e., go to) Viṣṇu's heaven; he goes to a great hell.

152b-164. It is heard from Lomaśa that if a man by chance observes fast on the eleventh day of a month, he does not undergo agony (caused) by Yama. There is nothing else that is as purifying as this in the three worlds. Both the days (i.e., the two ekādaśī days) of Viṣṇu destroy sins. O best among vaiśyas, as long as a creature does not observe a fast on the day sacred to Viṣṇu, sins live in his body. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya (sacrifices) are not equal (even) to a sixteenth part of (the merit due to) a fast on the eleventh day. All that sin which men have committed with the eleven organs (of cognition and action), O vaiśya, perishes by (observing) the fast on the eleventh day. There is no other (vow bringing) merit like the (fast on) the ekādaśī (day). Even those who have observed (the ekādaśī-fast) under some pretext, do not go under the sway of the son of the Sun (i.e., Yama). It grants heaven and salvation; it gives good health. It gives a good wife; it gives sons that live (i.e., that do not die before the parents). O vaiśya, Gaṅgā, Gayā, Kāśī, Puṣkara or even any place sacred to Viṣṇu cannot be equated to the day of Viṣṇu (i.e., ekādaśī). Yamunā and Candrabhāgā are not equal to Viṣṇu's day (i.e., ekādaśī) by which the position of Viṣṇu is obtained without any effort. O vaiśya, by keeping awake during the night and observing a fast on Viṣṇu's day a man certainly emancipates ten ancestors of the father's family, ten of the mother's family and ten of the wife's (family). Those, who have given up attachment to the pairs (of opposites), who have made him (i.e., Viṣṇu) having the enemy of

serpents (i.e., Garuḍa) as his banner as their abode, who wear garlands, who have put on yellow garments, go to Viṣṇu's abode. A sinner who observes a fast in his childhood, youth or old age on the ekādaśī day, does not meet with a great misery, O best among vaiśyas.

165-167a. Men go to heaven by having observed a fast for three nights or having bathed at holy places or by having donated gold, sesamum seeds and cows. O vaiśya, those who do not bathe at the sacred places or who have not given (a gift of) gold or who have not practised penance are unhappy everywhere. I have told you in brief what piety is. I have defined hell (also).

167b-170. (A man should have) no malice towards any being by words, thoughts or physical acts. (He should) control (his) senses; (he should give) gifts; (he should) worship Viṣṇu; and should always properly follow the duties pertaining to the caste and stage of life. O vaiśya, a man who desires (to go to) heaven should never tell (anyone) about his penance and gifts. He should thus give according to his capacity and with a desire for his own well-being sandals, garments, food, leaves, roots, fruits and water. O vaiśya, even a poor man should make his day productive.

171-174. In this world and in the next one what is not given does not come (to help a man). The donors do not meet with the agonies (inflicted) by Yama. They have a long life and repeatedly become wealthy. What is the use of talking much in this matter? People meet with misery by wicked deeds. Men (engaged) in pious works everywhere and at all times go up to heaven. Therefore, (right) from childhood one should collect religious merit. Thus I have told you everything. What else do you desire to hear?

Vikuṇḍala said:

175-179 O gentle sir, having heard your words my mind is pleased. The water of Gaṅgā instantly removes sins. (So also) the words of the good remove sins instantly. To oblige (others), to talk agreeably is the natural virtue of the good. Who makes the moon, the orb of (i.e., containing) nectar, cold? O you divine messenger, then tell me through pity towards me who am asking you, how can my brother have instant acquital from hell ?

Hearing these words of (i.e., uttered by) him, the divine messenger, observing meditation for a moment, and being tied by the bond of friendship (with Vikuṇḍala) said: "O vaiśya, if you desire heaven for your brother, then give him all the religious merit that you have collected in your eighth existence."

Vikuṇḍala said:

180. What is that religious merit? How was it produced? Which was my former existence? O messenger, tell all that to me so that I shall quickly give (my religious merit to my brother.)

The dive messenger said:

181-189. O vaiśya, listen, I shall explain to you that merit with its cause. Formerly in the holy Madhuvana lived a sage named Śākuni. He was endowed with penance and learning, and was equal to Brahman in lustre. He begot nine sons like planets on (his wife) Revatī: Dhruva, Śīla, Budha, Tārā, and Jyotiṣmat, as the fifth. These maintained sacred fire and took delight in household duties. Nirmoha, Jitakāma, Dhyānakośa and Guṇādhika—these four sons of the brāhmaṇa were detached from the householder's life. Being free from all desires they took to the fourth stage of life. They lived in the same village. They all were detached and had no possessions. They were devoid of hopes, did not exert themselves, and looked equally upon a clod, a stone and gold. They covered themselves with anything; they ate whatever (they got). They received (food etc. only) in the evening; and they were greatly intent on meditating on Viṣṇu, They had overcome sleep; they had controlled their diet; they endured wind and cold. Looking upon the entire mobile and immobile world as Viṣṇu's form, they easily roamed over the earth. They remained quiet with (i.e., did not talk to) one another. The meditating saints did not perform any act for (personal) gain. They had achieved knowledge, had no doubt and were conversant with the modifications of thought (*cidvikāra*).

190-200a. Thus, these, oppressed by hunger and thirst came in the noon to the house of you, a brāhmaṇa, who were in your eighth existence staying with the members of your family like the son and the wife in Madhyadeśa. You saw them in the courtyard of your house when offerings were being made to all deities

(before meals). With faltering words, with tears in your eyes, with joy and confusion, you greeted them all by prostrating before them respectfully, by saluting their feet by (keeping your) head (on their feet) and joining (the palms of) your hands in obeisance and with sweet and agreeable words: "Today my existence is fruitful, so also my life is fruitful. Today Viṣṇu is pleased with me. Today I have secured a protector, and am purified. Today I am blessed, my house is blessed, members of my family are blessed today, my parents are blessed today, my cows, my learning, my wealth are blessed today, since I have seen your feet removing the three (kinds of) miseries, for seeing you is as fortunate as seeing Viṣṇu himself". Having thus adored them and having washed their feet (with water) you held that (water) on your head with great devotion, O best among the vaiśyas. O vaiśya, you held the water (used) for (washing their) feet on your head. Having worshipped them with sandal (-paste), flowers, sacred rice-grains, incense and lamps with devotion, you fed them with excellent food. The great ascetics were pleased and rested in your house at night meditating upon the highest Brahman which is regarded as the light of lights.

200b-206. O best vaiśya, I cannot describe (even) with a thousand mouths the religious merit which you secured by (your showing) hospitality to them. Among the beings creatures are superior; among creatures the intellectuals are superior. Among the intellectuals gods are superior. Among men brāhmaṇas are superior. Among brāhmaṇas the learned are superior; among the learned those of firm determination are superior. Among those superior are those who carry out their determinations into action. Among them superior are those who know Brahman. Therefore, they are to be very much adored, and so they are best in the three worlds. O best among the vaiśyas, their company destroys great sins. The knowers of Brahman taking rest in the house of a householder and pleased thereby destroy in a moment the sins collected from one's birth. A sage staying (in a householder's home) for a night completely burns the householder's sins accumulated upto his death. Give that religious merit to your brother, by which he will be liberated.

207-209. Hearing these words of the messenger, he quickly

gave his merit (to his brother). The brother too came out of hell with his mind pleased. Being honoured with a shower of flowers by gods they went to heaven. Well honoured by the two (brothers) the messenger went as he had come. The son of a vaiśya, having heard the messenger's words which enlightened the entire world, which were like the words of the Veda, having emancipated his brother by giving him the merit of his deeds, went with him to the excellent world of the lord of gods.

210. O king, he who would recite or hear this account, would, being free from grief, obtain the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Sugandha, Arundhatīvaṭa, Sindhuprabhava etc.

Nārada said:

1-2, Thence, O best of kings, a man should go to Sugandha, well-known in the world. With his soul freed from all sins, he is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, from there a pilgrim should go to Rudrāvarta. O king, a man having bathed there, is honoured in heaven.

3-4. O best of men, a man who has bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven. Having bathed at Karṇahrada there and having worshipped Śiva, he does not meet with misery and goes to heaven.

5-7a. Thence the pilgrim should in due succession go to Kubjā. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of having given) a thousand cows and goes to heaven. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Arundhatīvaṭa. Having bathed at Samudraka and having fasted for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows and goes to heaven.

7b-10a. Being controlled and calm, he should then go to Brahmāvarta. He obtains the (fruit of a) horse sacrifice, and goes to heaven. Having bathed in the water of Yamunā he should go

to (the holy place called) Yamunāprabhava. Having obtained the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in heaven. Having reached the sacred place called Darvīsaṁkramaṇa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

10b-13a. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Sindhuprabhava, the source of Sindhu, resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas and having stayed there for five nights, he should give much gold. Then having reached (the holy place of) the goddess very difficult to reach a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go to the position of Śukra. Having reached Ṛṣikulyā and Vasiṣṭha also, O descendent of Bharata, and having crossed Vasiṣṭha all the castes become (like) brāhmaṇas.

13b-14. A man having bathed at Ṛṣikulyā goes to the world of sages, if, O king, he, subsisting on vegetables, lives there for a month. Having reached Bhṛgutuṅga he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice.

15-17a. O hero, having gone to Pramokṣa he is free from all sins. A pious man having reached (this) holy place difficult to reach in (the months of) Kārtika and Mārgaśīrṣa obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra (sacrifices). Thence having reached Sandhyā and the excellent Vidyātīrtha he should bathe (there). He becomes a master of all lores.

17b-18a. Fasting once a day he should stay for a night at Mahāśrama which frees (a man) from all sins. He (thereby) lives in holy worlds.

18b-21. By living for a month at Mahālaya and by taking food once in three days he having himself crossed (the ocean of the mundane existence) emancipates the creatures—ten preceding and ten succeeding (members of his family). Having seen the very auspicious Maheśvara saluted by gods a man having got all his objects, should not at all grieve for death. He with his soul purified from all sins would obtain much gold. Then he should go to Vetasikā resorted to by the Grandsire. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go the highest position.

22-23. Then having reached the holy place (called) Sundarikā resorted to by siddhas, he possesses handsomeness (i.e., becomes handsome). This has been observed by the ancients.

Then, being controlled and calm, he, having gone to Brāhmaṇikā, goes to Brahmā's world in a car having the colour of a lotus.

24-29. Thence he should go to Naimiṣa, the auspicious (place) resorted to by brāhmaṇas. Brahmā always resides there with hosts of gods. Half the sin of him who desires (to go to) Naimiṣa, perishes. A man on just entering it is freed from the entire sin. A wise man intent on (visiting) holy places, should stay there—at Naimiṣa—for a month. O descendant of Bharata, whichever holy places are there on the earth are (present) at Naimiṣa. Being restrained and with his diet controlled a man having bathed (i.e. who bathes) there obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice, (and), O best among the Bharatas, purifies (the members of) his family up to the seventh (descendant). The wise say that he who wholly devoted to fasting would cast his life at Naimiṣa, would stay in heaven and rejoice there. O best of kings, Naimiṣa is always pure and holy.

30. A man, having gone to Gaṅgodbheda and having stayed there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice) and would always be one with Brahman.

31. Having reached Sarasvatī he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of his manes. There is no doubt that he rejoices in the worlds of the Sārasvatas.

32. O king, thence a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Bāhudā. By staying there for a night he is honoured in heaven.

33a. The man obtains the fruit of a Devasatra sacrifice.

33b-34a. Thence he should go to the holy place (called) Rajanī surrounded by meritorious persons. Engaged in worshipping the manes and deities, he would obtain (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

34b-39a. Having reached (the holy place called) Vimalāśoka he shines like the moon. Having stayed there for a night he is honoured in heaven. Thence he should go to Gopratāra, an excellent holy place (on the bank) of Sarayū, where (-from) Rāma with his servants, army and vehicles, after having left his house, went to heaven due to the prowess of that holy place. Due to Rāma's favour and exertion, O king, a man bathing at

that holy place, viz. Gopratāra, has his soul purified of all sins and is honoured in heaven. O you descendant of Kuru, a man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha on (the bank of) Gomatī, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and purifies his own family.

39b-40. Then, O best of Bharatas, there is a sacred place called Śatasāhasraka. Being restrained and with his diet controlled, a man, having bathed there, obtains the meritorious fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows, O best of Bharatas.

41-42a. Then a pious man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Ūrdhvasthāna. Having bathed at Koṭitīrtha and having worshipped Guha, O king, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows, and becomes bright.

42b-44. Then having gone to Vārāṇasī and having worshipped the bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) and having bathed at Kapilāhrada, he would obtain the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). O lord of kings, having reached the Mārkaṇḍeya tīrtha difficult to reach, on the confluence of Gomatī and Gaṅgā, well-known in the world, he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and would emancipate his (own) family.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

The Merits of Vārāṇasī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, you have described in brief the importance of Vārāṇasī. (Please) tell it in detail. Then (only) my mind is (i.e. would be) pleased.

Nārada said:

2. Now I shall tell you the account based on the merits of Vārāṇasī, merely by hearing which a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa.

3. Formerly, goddess (Pārvatī) having gone to the seat of the lord asked Mahādeva, the enemy of Tripura, on the peak of Meru:

The goddess said:

4-7. O Mahādeva, god of gods, remover of the affliction of your devotees, how can a man see you soon (i.e. in a short time)? O Śaṅkara, in the world (the path) of Sāṁkhya or Yoga or (of) meditation or Karmayoga laid down in the Vedas are full of great exertion; so also are other (means). Tell me this most secret knowledge which is practised by Indra and others and which destroys the fire of passion, for the good of all beings, by which you, the revered one, who are (so) subtle, can be seen by human beings, the meditating saints with tranquil minds, and those who practise the path of duty.

The lord said:

8-26. I shall now tell you the knowledge which is properly explained by the great sages, which special knowledge is excluded by the ignorant and which should not be told. The city Vārāṇasī is my most secret holy place. It helps all the beings to cross the ocean of the worldly existence. O great goddess, the magnanimous ones observing great restraint live there devoutly practising my vow (i.e. a vow sacred to me). That holy place Avimukta is best among all holy places, is best among all abodes, is thy best knowledge among all (kinds of) knowledge. There are other holy places and sacred abodes situated in crematory and found in divine land. My abode is not at all connected with the world; it is in the Intermediate Space. Those that are not liberated see there; those that are liberated see mentally. This is a famous crematory well-known as Avimukta. O beautiful lady, being Kāla (the god of death) I destroy this world. O goddess, this place is dearer to me of all secrets. My devotees go there and enter me only. Whatever is given there, muttered there, offered or performed there, whichever penance is practised there, and also meditation, study or knowledge (gained) there becomes inexhaustible. All the sin of a man collected in the former thousands of births perishes when he enters Avimukta. Men—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, mixtures of castes, women, mlecchas, other mixed tribes of low birth, insects, ants, other beasts and birds, when they die at the proper time at Avimukta, O beautiful lady, are born in my auspicious city as having crescent moon on their

heads, three eyes, and having great bulls as their vehicles. No sinner who dies at Avimukta goes to hell. Being favoured by the lord all of them go to the highest position. A man thinking that salvation is difficult to obtain and realising that the mundane existence is extremely terrible, having broken his feet with stone, should live in Vārāṇasī. O goddess, the path liberating from the mundane existence one who dies here or there is difficult to be obtained even by penance. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, by my favour (everything) takes place duly. Those who are immature do not see as they are deluded by my illusory power. They again and again live in feces, urine and semen. A learned man, though smitten by hundreds of dangers, goes to the highest place, going where he is not unhappy. He goes to Śiva's abode free from birth, death and old age.

27-28. The position of those who desire salvation is the same as of those who do not die again, and reaching which, the learned think, one is blessed. The position that is obtained on (reaching salvation) is not obtained by gifts, penance, sacrifices or knowledge.

29-35. The wise know that Avimukta is a great medicine for the people of various castes or having no castes, the caṇḍālas that are condemned, with their bodies filled with blemishes and big sins. Avimukta is great knowledge; Avimukta is a great seat; Avimukta is a great fact; Avimukta is highly auspicious. I give them who, having firm dedication, live at Avimukta, that highest knowledge, that highest position. Prayāga, Naimiṣāraṇya, Śrīśaila, Mahābala, Kedāra, Bhadrakarṇa, Gayā and Puṣkara, also Kurukṣetra, Bhadrakoṭi, Narmadā, Mrātakeśvarī, Śālagrāma, Kubjāmra, the excellent Kokāmukha, Prabhāsa, Vijayeśāna, Gokarṇa and Bhadrakarṇa—these holy places are well-known in the three worlds. Men who die (here) do not go to the highest principle as those who die at Vārāṇasi.

36-56. If a man enters (i.e. bathes in) Gaṅgā, flowing in three streams, especially at Vārāṇasī, it would destroy the sin committed in hundreds of his former births. Gaṅgā is easy to reach at other places. Śrāddha, gifts, penance, muttering (of a deity's names), vows—all this is very difficult to be found at Vārāṇasī. A man living at Vārāṇasī would mutter (names of deities), would offer oblations, gives gifts everyday, worships

gods, always eats (i.e. subsists upon) air. Even if a man is a sinner or a rogue, he purifies the entire family on reaching Vārāṇasī. Those, who worship and extol Mahādeva at Vārāṇasī, are free from all sins and should be known as the lord of Śiva's attendants. At other places the highest place is reached only after a hundred births by means of the practice of yoga (i.e. deep meditation), knowledge or othar things. But O you wife of the lord of gods, those devotees who stay at Vārāṇasī, obtain the best salvation in one birth only. Where the path of yoga and the path of knowledge (are combined), salvation is obtained in one birth only. A man having reached Avimukta would not desire (to go to) any other penance-grove. Since I have not abandoned it, it is said to be Avimukta. That is the secret of secrets. This is said to be wisdom. O you beautiful one, that position which is got by those that are devoted to knowledge or ignorance, and are desirous of the highest joy, is obtained by him who dies at Avimukta. Vārāṇasī is more holy than all the places that are seen in the body of Avimukta where the lord Mahādeva himself explained for Avimukta the liberating Brahman. A man would obtain in Vārāṇasī, that which is said to be the higher principle Avimukta, in (just) one birth. As between the two eye-brows, as in the navel, in the heart or the head, in the sun, so Avimukta is well-established in Vārāṇasī. Vārāṇasī city is (situated) between Varaṇā and Asī. There only is well settled the principle of Avimukta. There was never, or there never will be a higher place than Vārāṇasī, where (live) god Nārāyaṇa, and Mahādeva, the lord in heaven. There gods with gandharvas, yakṣas, serpents and demons always worship him, (who is) the god of gods, the grandsire. O goddess, the great sinners, those who are greater sinners than they are, go to the highest position after having come to Vārāṇasī. Therefore, he who desires salvation, should, being restrained, stay at Vārāṇasī till death. Getting knowledge from Mahādeva he is liberated. But difficulties may come up in the case of one whose mind is smitten with sin. Therefore one should not commit a sin by body, mind or speech. O you of a good vow, this is the secret of gods and Purāṇas. Nobody truly knows (i.e. has) the knowledge about Avimukta.

Nārada said:

57-65. The god of gods told the entire (account) that destroys all sins to the deities and sages and the spiritual teachers that were listening. As Viṣṇu is the greatest among the gods, as Śiva is the greatest among lords, so is this place the best of all places. Those who have propitiated Rudra in a former birth, obtain (i.e. visit) the great holy place Avimukta, the abode of Śiva. Those whose mind is taken away due to having been born in Kali age, are not able to know that great place of the spiritual teacher. The sin of those who always remember and talk about this city, quickly perishes in this world and the next. God Śiva having time as his body would destroy all those sins which those who have taken an abode here commit. A man should come to (i.e. visit) this place resorted to by those who desire salvation; those who die would not be again born in the ocean of the mundane existence. Therefore by all efforts a man, whether he is a yogi or no yogi, whether a sinner or the most virtuous one, should live in Vārāṇasi. The thought about (visiting) Avimukta should not be changed even by the words of the people, or of the father, or of the preceptor.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara

Nārada said:

1-14a. There is a pure auspicious Phallus called Oṁkāra, merely by remembering which a man is freed from all sins. This is superior knowledge, the excellent Pañcāyatana, which is always resorted to by sages in Vārāṇasī, and which liberates (men). There actually Mahādeva, Rudra, who gives liberation to creatures rejoices in the form of the five abodes. This knowledge relating to Paśupati (i.e. Śiva) is called Pañcāyatana. This is that pure Phallus, Oṁkāra, that stands there. The Phallus of the lord is of five forms: Śāntyatītā, Śānti, Aparāvarā Vīdyā (i.e.

higher and lower knowledge), Pratiṣṭhā and Nivṛtti. The Phallus that supports the five Liṅgas, Brahmā and others, and that is indicative of Oṁkāra, is called Pañcāyatana. A wise man should remember the immutable Liṅga, i.e. Pañcāyatana, of the lord. At the end of his body (i.e. when he dies) he enters the highest light, joy. There formerly gods, sages, siddhas, brāhmaṇic sages ultimately obtained the best position after having waited upon the lord. O lord of kings, on the auspicious bank of Matsyodarī there is the most secret place, of the size of gocarma (cow's hide), the excellent Oṁkāreśvara; there is the Liṅga called Kṛttivāseśvara, the excellent Madhyameśvara, and also Viśveśvara, Oṁkāra and Kandarpeśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, these are the secret Liṅgas in Vārāṇasī. Nobody here knows (i.e. experiences) destruction due to Śambhu's favour. O king, listen to the greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara. At that time formerly a demon having become an elephant came there near Śiva to kill the brāhmaṇas who were everyday worshipping Śiva. From the Liṅga of them Mahādeva, the three-eyed (god), affectionate towards his devotees, came there for the protection of his devotees.

14b-25. Śiva having with contempt killed the demon in the form of the elephant by means of his trident used his hide as his garment. Therefore, he is known as Kṛttivāseśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sages obtained a great superhuman power and with the same body obtained that highest position. Those who are called Vidyāvidyeśvara, Rudra, Śiva, have always resorted to the Liṅga (called) Krttivāseśvara. Men knowing that Kaliyuga is fearful and full of great impiety, do not forsake Kṛttivāsa; by doing so they are undoubtedly blessed. (At other places) liberation may or may not be obtained after a thousand existences; but at this Kṛttivāsa liberation is obtained after (just) one existence. They describe this place to be the abode of all siddhas, protected by Śambhu Mahādeva, the lord of gods. In every yuga brāhmaṇas that are controlled and are masters of deep meditation worship the magnanimous one and mutter the (hymn called) Śatarudriya. They constantly extol god Tryambaka, having the garment of (elephant-)hide. They meditate in their heart upon Śiva, Sthāṇu, who is in the heart of all. Siddhas, the brāhmaṇas who live at Vārāṇasi sing songs. Even by means

of one song salvation would take place in the case of those who resort to Kṛttivāsa. They obtain a birth very difficult to obtain, which is desired, in brāhmaṇa families. Being steady in meditation, the sages maditate upon Rudra, the great lord, in their hearts. The best sages, living in Vārāṇasī, propitiate the supreme lord. They perform sacrifices without any (selfish) aim; they praise Rudra; they salute Śambhu. "I salute Bhava, the abode of pure, deep meditation. I resort to the ancient Girīśa. I remember Rudra, settled in my heart; I know Mahādeva of many forms."

CHAPTFR THIRTYFIVE

Greatness of Kapardin

Nārada said:

1-2a. Now there is another excellent Liṅga, (called) Kapardīśvara. O king, having bathed there according to proper rites and offered oblations to manes, one is freed from all sins and obtains salvation and enjoyment.

2b-11. Then there is another holy place called Piśācamocana. There is the wonderful (form of) god that gives salvation and that removes all blemishes. A demon taking up a terrible form of a tiger went to the excellent Kapardīśvara to eat up a female deer. There she with her heart frightened again and again circumambulated (the deity). Running and extremely perpflexed she came under the sway of the tiger. That very strong tiger having torn her with sharp nails went to another place after having noticed the best sages. That young female deer almost dead looked in front of Kapardīśa, like a great flame, lustrous like the moon in the sky. (She appeared) to have three eyes, dark blue throat, and with her hair on the head marked with the moon, to have mounted upon a bull, and surrounded by men like her only. The (divine) beings roaming in the sky, showered upon her flowers on all sides. Being turned into one of the female chiefs of Śiva's attendants she vanished

just at that moment only. Seeing that great wonder the gods and others praised it. That is the Liṅga of Śiva called Kapardīśvara, the best one. By merely remembering, it a man gets quickly free from his sins. All blemishes like passion, anger, and difficulties of the residents of Vārāṇasī perish by worshipping Kapardīśvara.

12-14. Therefore one should always see the excellent Kapardīśvara, one should worship (the Phallus) with great care, and should extol (the lord) with Vedic hymns. There is no doubt that the meditating saints of tranquil minds who always meditate (upon the lord), attain perfection within six months. By worshipping this deity sins like killing a brāhmaṇa perish, since one who has bathed in the tank called Piśācamocana obtains peace.

15-24. Formerly, a brāhmaṇa ascetic of a severe vow and known as Śaṅkukarṇa worshipped Śiva at that holy place. He constantly muttered (the names of) Rudra of the form of Brahman. The meditating saint taking the vow devoutly worshipped there the lord by means of flowers, incense etc., hymns, salutation and circumambulations. Once he saw a hungry ghost with its body covered with bones and skin, sighing repeatedly, that had come there. Having seen him the best sage full of great pity said (to him): "Who are you? From what region have you come to this region?" The ghost oppressed by hunger, said (these) words to him: "In my former existence I was a brāhmaṇa having wealth and grains. I had sons and grandsons and was eager to maintain my family. I did not worship great deities, cows and guests. I never did any small or big (act of) religious merit. Once I saw the revered Viśveśvara having the lord of bulls as his vehicle, touched him, and saluted him. Then after a short time I died. (But) O sage, I did not see (i.e. go to) that very terrible house of Yama. Now, being overpowered by thirst I do not know what is beneficial or otherwise. O lord, if you see some means to emancipate me, (please) do it. Salutation to you. I have sought your refuge (now)."

25-28. Śaṅkukarṇa who was thus addressed by the ghost, said to him: "There is no person like you who has done the most meritorious deed, since you have formerly seen Śiva, the lord of the universe. You touched him and again saluted him. Who else in the world is like you? Due to the ripening of the

deed you have come to this region. Being calm, quickly cast off this vile body here only."

29-34. That ghost, thus addressed by that kind sage, remembered after making his mind tranquil, Kapardīśvara, the best, three-eyed god, and bathed there. Then, he having bathed there near the sage and endowed with divine ornaments died and was seen in an aeroplane resembling the sun and had his charming head marked with the moon. With Rudras living in heaven and being looked after by the meditating saints along with the unbounded Vālakhilyas,[1] he shines like the full god, the sun at the time of rising. Siddhas and hosts of gods praise him in the heaven. Charming celestial nymphs danced. Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and kinnaras etc. showered flowers mixed with water. Being praised by the groups of the best sages, having secured knowledge by the favour of the lord, he entered that best orb full of the three (gods) where Rudra shines. Seeing the ghost liberated the sage, being pleased in mind, thought about Rudra, the only wise one, saluted Agni, and praised that Kapardin.

Śaṅkukarṇa said:

35. I approach you, Kapardin, greater than the great, the protector, the only ancient man, the lord of deep meditation, the giver of desired objects, the sun, the fire, and the one mounted upon a tawny bull.

36-44. I seek the refuge of you, the essence of Brahman, placed in my heart, full of gold, possessing miraculous power, the beginning and the end (of the world), Rudra, staying in heaven, a great sage, of the nature of Brahman and pure, endowed with a thousand feet, eyes and heads of a thousand forms, and (remaining) beyond darkness. I salute the eternal Śambhu, the extreme limit of Brahman, the revered one, the lord, the lord of Hiraṇyagarbha, the three-eyed one, and also seek the refuge of (you), wherefrom the world has originated, and unto whom it will perish (i.e. merge), and by whom, i.e. Śiva,

1. Vālakhilyas—This is the name of a class of sages of the size of a thumb. Sixty thousand were produced from Brahmā's body and surround the chariot of the sun.

this entire (world) is pervaded. I salute you, who are without any characteristic mark, whose form cannot be seen, who are your own lord and of that of the soul, who are of a uniform nature, who are beyond Brahman, and who are the highest lord, other than whom nothing exists; whom the meditating saints who have become one with the highest soul. giving up meditation along with mystical letter forming the essential part of the hymn, after securing concentration see. I always bow to him who is beyond Brahman and of the highest form. I always salute him who is beyond Brahman, who has no qualification like a name, whose form cannot be seen. I seek your shelter, of the self-born one. I always salute your form which is beyond Brahman, which is not one, which, those engaged in Vedic recitals see to be without a body, to be without distinctions, to be one along with the knowledge of Brahman, from which Pradhāna (or Prakṛti) and the ancient Puruṣa obtain lustre, (which) the gods salute. I salute him, remaining in the lustre, the huge time, which is your form. I always seek the refuge of Guheśa; I approach the ancient Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva), living on the mountain. I approach Śiva, Hari, (Śiva) having the moon on his head, the trident-holder. I seek your refuge.

45-47. Thus having praised the revered Kapardin, Śaṅkukarṇa also prostrated himself on the ground and uttered the highest (syllable) Om. At that moment only the great Phallus of Śiva appeared there. It was knowledge, joy, and very much like the fire having a crore of flames. Śaṅkukarṇa's soul was liberated. His pure soul moved everywhere. It merged into that pure Phallus. (Thus) a great wonder took place.

48-50. I have thus told you the secret and the greatness of Kapardin. Nobody knows it. Even a learned man is deluded through ignorance. He who would daily listen to this account that destroys sins, would with his soul being purified due to having abandoned sins, secure proximity with Rudra. He who being pure would always recite this hymn (called) Brahmapāra in the morning, noon and evening would secure the highest contemplation.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

The Greatness of Madhyameśa

Nārada said:

1-2a. O great king, at Vārāṇasī, there is the best (place called) Madhyameśa. At that place that great lord Mahādeva always rejoices with the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) and is surrounded by the Rudras. Formerly the universal god Hṛṣīkeśa, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, lived there for a year (and was) always surrounded by devotees of Śiva.

2b-5a. With his entire body smeared with dust, and intent upon studying Rudra(-hymn), and observing the vow of the devotee of Śiva, Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) worshipped Śiva. All those many disciples of him, intent upon celibacy, got knowledge from his mouth and saw Maheśvara.

5b-9a. That great revered lord Nīlalohita (i.e. Śiva), the giver of boons, directly gave an excellent boon to Kṛṣṇa. "Those devotees of meine who worship Govinda with proper rites, will have the knowledge belonging to Śiva, which is full of the world. Those who are devoted to me, should salute him, should worship him and should meditate upon him. There is no doubt that by my favour they will have no birth. The sin like killing a brāhmaṇa etc. of those who here see after bathing the lord of gods, the trident-holder, quickly perishes.

9b-10a. Those mortals who, though engaged in sinful acts, die here, also go to that highest place. No doubt should be raised in this matter.

10b-12. Those wise men who after bathing in Gaṅgā, after having worshipped the lord Mahādeva, Madhyameśvara, (obtain) knowledge, (practise) penance, and offer śrāddha and piṇḍa at this place are blessed. Each one of these rites that are performed, purifies (the members of his) family up to the seventh descendant. The fruit that a man gets here is tenfold of the fruit that he gets by bathing at Sannihati, when the Sun is eclipsed by Rāhu.

13. O great king, I have thus told you about the greatness of Madhyameśvara. He who listens to it with great devotion, goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Other Holy Places of Vārāṇasī

Nārada said:

1. O Yudhiṣṭhira, O great king, there are also other holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Listen to (the description of) them.

2-9. The holy place superior to Prayāga (the place of the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā) is the auspicious Prayāga (a holy place at Vārāṇasī). Similarly there is a holy place called Viśvatīrtha, and also the excellent holy place Tālatīrtha. There is the holy place called Ākāśa, so also the excellent one called Ārṣabha (i.e. sacred to Ṛṣabha). There is the great holy place called Sunīla, and the excellent holy place called Gaurītīrtha. So also there is the holy place called Prājāpatya and there is the (holy place called) Svargadvāra. There is also the (holy place called) Jambukeśvara and the excellent Dharma. The Gayātīrtha is a great holy place, so also Mahānadī is a holy place. Nārāyaṇa is a great holy place and Vāyutīrtha is excellent. Jñānatīrtha is a great secret place, and Vārāhatīrtha is excellent. Yamatīrtha is auspicious; so also Sammūrtika is holy. O great king, there is the Agnitīrtha, and there is also the excellent holy place Kalaśeśvara. So also there are (the holy places called) Nāgatīrtha, Somatīrtha and Sūryatīrtha. Then there is the very secret (holy place) called Parvata; so also there is the excellent Maṇikarṇya. Ghaṭotkaca is the best holy place, so also there is the Śrītīrtha (sacred to) the Grandsire. Gaṅgātīrtha is (sacred) to the lord of gods. So also Yayātitīrtha is excellent. There is the sacred place holy to Kapila; so also there is (the holy place called) Someśa; so also there is (the holy place called) Brahmatīrtha.

10-12. When Brahmā had formerly come there to instal the ancient Liṅga, Viṣṇu installed that Liṅga of the lord at that time. Having bathed there and having come (to Viṣṇu), Brahmā said to Viṣṇu: "I had brought this Liṅga. Why did you instal it?" Viṣṇu said to him: "My devotion to Rudra is stronger than yours. Therefore I have installed the Liṅga. It will be named after you."

13. Similarly there is the holy place called Bhūteśvara, so

also there is Dharmasamudbhava. Then there is the auspicious Gandharvatīrtha, and there is the holy place called Vāhneya (i.e. sacred to Agni).

14-19. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there are holy places called Daurvāsika, Vyomatīrtha, Candratīrtha, Cintāṅgadeśvaratīrtha, and the auspicious Vidyādhareśvara. There are (also the holy places called) Kedāratīrtha, Ugra, and the excellent Kālañjara; so also Sārasvata, Prabhāsa, and the auspicious Rudrakarmahrada. There is the great holy place (called) Kokila, and there is the holy place called Mahālaya. So also there is the excellent holy place Hiraṇyagarbha. There is also the excellent holy place (called) Gopreksa. Then there are the holy places (like) Upaśānta, Śiva, the excellent Vyāghreśvara, the great holy place Trilocana, so also Lokārka and Uttara. There is the holy place (called) Kapālamocana, destroying (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. (Then) there is the very holy place (called) Śukreśvara, so also there is the excellent Ānandapura. These are the holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Even during crores of kalpas, it would not be possible to describe them in detail.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Gayā and Other Holy Places

Nārada said:

1. O lord, I have described to you in brief the greatness of Vārāṇasi, and the holy places (situated) in it. (Now) listen to (the description of) other holy places.

2-4. O descendant of Bharata, a man being restrained and calm, having gone to Gayā, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice merely by going there. There is (a place) named Akṣayavaṭa known in the three worlds. O lord, oblations offered to the manes at that place become inexhaustible. Having bathed in the Mahānadī he should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he would obtain (i.e. go to) the imperishable worlds and would liberate his family.

5-6. Then he should go to Brahmasaras served by (i.e. in) Brahmāraṇya. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) as the night obtains the dawn. Brahmā has raised (i.e. put up) the best sacrificial post in the lake. By circumambulating the sacrificial post he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice.

7-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Dhenuka, well-known in the world. Living there even for a night and offering a sesamum-cow he with his soul purified of all sins, would certainly go to Soma's world. There is, O great king, even now the mark: A tawny cow along with her calf still roams over the mountain. The foot-prints of the cow with her calf are seen even now. Having bathed in (the water collected at) those foot-prints, O lord of kings, O best king, little sin that is (left) perishes, O descendant of Bharata.

11-12. Thence he should go to Gṛdhravaṭa, the place of the god, viz. the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva). He should bathe there and (apply) ashes after meeting (i.e. visiting) the bull-bannered god. A brāhmaṇa, thereby, would have observed a vow for twelve years. All the sin of other castes perishes.

13-18. Thence he should go to the high mountain resounding with music. O best among the Bharatas, the place sacred to Sāvitrī is seen there. A brāhmaṇa with a severe vow should offer the sandhyā(-prayer) there. By (doing) that he would have offered the sandhyā(-prayer) for twelve years. O best of Bharatas, Yonidvāra is there only. Having gone there a man is freed from the danger of (being conceived in) a womb. O king, a man who would live in Gayā for both the bright and dark fortnights (of a month), purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). There is no doubt about this. Many sons would be desired by him (i.e. he would have many sons) even if he would go to Gayā all alone. He might perform a horse sacrifice or give a dark blue bull. Then O king, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to Phalgu. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would reach (i.e. get) the highest well-being.

19-20a. Thence, being tranquil he should, O lord of kings, go to Dharmapṛṣṭha where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma (i.e. Righteousness) always lives. Having seen Dharma, he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

20b-23. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place of Brahmā. Having gone there and having been settled in a vow he should worship Brahmā. O descendant of Bharata, (thereby) he obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifices. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Rājagṛha. Having bathed there he rejoices like Kakṣīvat.[1] The food is (there) regularly offered to Yakṣiṇī. The sacred Fire-Man formerly lived there. By the favour of Yakṣiṇī he is freed from (the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa.

24-25. Thence he should go to Maṇināga. He would (thereby) obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, the poison of the bite of a serpent does not affect him who enjoys the food regularly offered to Maṇināga. Having stayed there for a night he is freed from all sins.

26-29a. O king, thence he should go to the grove of Gautama, the brāhmaṇic sage. Having bathed in the pool of Ahalyā he would reach the highest position. Reaching Śrī, he gets excellent wealth. O pious one, there is a tank well-known in the three worlds. He should bathe there. (Thereby) he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice. The tank of the royal sage Janaka is honoured by gods. Having bathed there he would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven.

29b-30a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Vināśana which frees (a man) from all sins. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Soma's world.

30b-36a. (Then) he should go to Gaṇḍakī produced from the water of all sacred places. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world. Thence, O pious one, having entered the penance-grove of Dhruva he undoubtedly rejoices among guhyakas, O noble one. Having reached the river Karmadā resorted to by siddhas he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) and goes to Soma's world. Thence having reached the river Viśālā, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to heaven. Then O king, having reached Dhārā of (i.e. sacred to) Maheśvara he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and

1. Kakṣīvān—He was a famous sage and was credited with the authorship of a few Vedic hymns. He was the son of Uśij and Dīrghatamas.

would liberate his family. A pure man having reached the lake of the residents of heaven does not meet with a disaster and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

36b-39. Then being restrained and calm he should go to (the sacred place called) Māheśapada. Having bathed at Māheśapada he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. O best among the Bharatas, there is a well-known, excellent sacred place taken away by the mighty Viṣṇu when, O lord of kings, it was being seized by a wicked demon Kūrmarūpa. O king, a man should bathe at that excellent holy place Tīrthakoṭi; (thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Puṇḍarīka sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

40-46. Thence, O best of men, he should go to the best place of Nārāyaṇa, where, O descendant of Bharata, Viṣṇu always lives in the vicinity and where gods like Brahmā and others, sages with penance as their wealth, and also Ādityas, Vasus and Rudras wait upon Viṣṇu. The place of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu of wonderful deeds is known as Śālagrāma. Having gone to the imperishable Viṣṇu, the lord of the three worlds and the giver of boons, a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O pious one, there is a pool freeing (a man) from all sins. In that pool all the four oceans are always present. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, a man would not meet with misery. Having gone to the everlasting, great god Viṣṇu, the giver of boons, he being free from debts, shines like Soma (i.e. the moon). Having approached Jātismara, he, pure and with his mind controlled, obtains the faculty of recollecting his former births after bathing there. There is no doubt about this.

47-48. Having gone to Vaṭeśvarapura and having worshipped Keśava (there) a man obtains (i.e. goes to) desired worlds by fasting there. There is no doubt about this. Thence, having gone to (the sacred place called) Vāmana, which destroys all sins and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not meet with a disaster.

49-50a. Having gone to Bharata's hermitage freeing (a man) from all sins he should there resort to Kauṣikī destroying great sins. A man (thereby) obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice.

50b-59. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent Campakāraṇya. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of giving away a thousand cows. Then having reached the sacred place (called) Govinda liked by the best ones and having fasted there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). O best among the Bharatas, having seen there the very lustrous lord of the world along with the goddess he would obtain (i.e. go to) the worlds of Mitra and Varuṇa. Having fasted there for three nights he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Then, being controlled and with his diet controlled he having reached Kanyāvasatha obtains (i.e. goes to) the worlds of Manu Prajāpati, O best of the Bharatas. Sages of severe vows say that even the smallest gift which men give at Kanyāvasatha becomes inexhaustible. Having reached Niṣṭhāvāsa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among men, those men who give gifts at the confluence of Niṣṭhā, go to the good world of Brahmā. There is Vasiṣṭha's hermitage well-known in the three worlds. A man who bathes there obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice). Having reached Devakūṭa resorted to by hosts of divine sages he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would liberate his family.

60-73. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the lake of the sage Kauṣika, where Viśvāmitra, the son of Kauśika, obtained the highest welfare. O best among the Bharatas, the wise one should live for a month there, i.e. at Kauśikī. After a month he obtains the religious merit which is due to a horse sacrifice. He who would stay at Mahāhrada, the best among all holy places, does not meet with a disaster and would obtain much gold. Having (then) gone to Kumāra staying in Vīrāśrama he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Indra's world. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, having gone to the lake at Nandinī resorted to by gods he obtains that fruit which is due to a human sacrifice. Having bathed at Kālikāsaṅgama, the confluence of Kauśikī and Āruṇī, and having fasted there for three nights a wise man is freed from all sins. A wise man having reached Urvaśī-tīrtha and having bathed in Kumbhakarṇāśrama, is honoured in the world. Similarly, being restrained and calm he having bathed at Kokāmukha gets

the faculty of recollecting his former existence. This has been observed by the ancients. Reaching Sakṛt river a brāhmaṇa becomes blessed. With his soul freed from all sins he goes to heaven. Having reached Ṛṣabhadvīpa he should resort to Krauñcaniṣūdana. Having bathed at Sarasvatī he seated in an aeroplane shines. O great king, Audyānaka is a great holy place resorted to by sages. He should bathe there. (By doing so) he is freed from all sins. There is no doubt that a man reaching the holy Brahmatīrtha resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Then having reached Campā and having bathed in Bhāgīrathī and having reached Daṇḍārpaṇa he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Thence a man should go to the auspicious Lāviḍhikā resorted to by the holy ones. (By that) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and seated in an aeroplane he is honoured.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Savidyā Sandhyā, Lauhitya, Karatoyā, etc.

Nārada said:

1-2. Then having reached Savidyā Sandhyā, the excellent holy place and having bathed there a man becomes learned. There is no doubt about this. Having reached the holy place Lauhitya, made the chief holy place by Rāma in olden days, he would obtain much gold.

3. Having reached Karatoyā a man who fasts (there) for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice, and goes to Indra's world.

4. O lord of kings, the wise say that a man obtains ten times (the fruit of an Aśvamedha by fasting) at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean.

5. O descendant of Bharata, he who, after having reached the yonder island in Gaṅgā, bathes there and fasts for three nights would obtain all desired objects.

6-7. Then having gone to the river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a person) from sins and reaching Virāja tīrtha, he shines like the moon. (By bathing) at Prabhava he purifies his family and destroys all sin. Obtaining the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows he purifies his family.

8-9. A pure man living at the confluence of Śoṇa and Jyotirathī after offering oblations to manes and deities, would get the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Having bathed at Vaṁśagulma at the source of Śoṇa and Narmadā he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice, O best among the Kurus.

10-11. A man having reached Ṛṣabhatīrtha in Kośala and having fasted there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. Reaching Kālatīrtha in Kośala a man should bathe (there). There is no doubt that he obtains the fruit eleven times greater than that of (giving away) a bull.

12-15. Having bathed at Puṣpavatī, a man who has fasted for three nights, would obtain the fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows and would liberate his family. Then, having with a restrained mind bathed at the Badarikātīrtha a man obtains long life and goes to heaven. Then reaching Mahendra resorted to by (Paraśurāma) the son of Jamadagni a man who bathes at Rāmatīrtha, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. The field (i.e. place) of Mātaṅga is just there, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

16-18. Having reached Śrīparvata he should bathe at the bank of the river. Thereby he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the great welfare. On Śrīparvata Mahādeva of great lustre and highly delighted lived. So also Brahmā surrounded by gods (lived there). A pure man with his mind controlled obtains after bathing at the Devahrada (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and obtains great welfare.

19-20. Having gone to the Ṛṣabha mountain in the Bhāṇḍa (region) which is adored by gods he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya and rejoices in heaven. Thence a man should go to Kāverī thronged by hosts of celestial nymphs. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

21-30a. He should, at that holy place of the ocean, bathe at

Kanyātīrtha. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is freed from all sins. Then, O lord of kings, having reached Gokarṇa in the sea, revered by people, where gods like Brahmā and others, all sages with penance as their wealth, goblins, yakṣas, ghosts, kinnaras with great serpents, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, human beings, snakes, rivers, oceans and mountains wait upon the lord of Umā, a man having fasted for three nights and having worshipped the lord (Śiva) obtains (the fruit of) ten horse sacrifices and the status of the chief of Śiva's attendants. Having fasted for twelve nights, a man is blessed. There only is the place of Gāyatrī well-known in three worlds. Having stayed there for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. This is confirmed by direct evidence of brāhmaṇas, O king. A twice-born, born of the mixture of castes by unlawful inter-marriage, who recites the Gāyatrī (-hymn) there, is furnished with a religious verse or a song(?), O king. Sāvitrī, however, goes away from a non-brāhmaṇa reciting (Gāyatrī-hymn). O brāhmaṇa-sage, having reached the tank at Saṁvarta, difficult to be reached, a man partakes of handsomeness (i.e. becomes handsome) and becomes fortunate.

30b-31a. Thence having reached Veṇā he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. A man (thereby) obtains an aeroplane to which peacocks and swans are yoked.

31b-33a. Thence having reached Godāvarī always resorted to by siddhas, he obtains (the fruit of) a Gavāmaya and goes to the world of Vāyu. Having bathed at the confluence of Veṇā he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya. Having bathed at Varadāsaṅgama, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows.

33b-39. A man having reached Brahmasthūṇā, and having fasted (there) for three nights, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, and he goes to heaven. Being restrained and calm, he, having reached Kubjavana, and having fasted for three nights and bathed there, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. Then having bathed (i.e. he should bathe) in Devahrada formed in the water of Kṛṣṇaveṇā, and also in Jyotirmātra tank, and in Kanyāśrama, where, having performed a hundred sacrifices, (Indra) the lord

of gods, went to heaven. By merely going there, a man would obtain (the fruit of) a hundred Agniṣṭoma sacrifices. Having bathed in the Sarvadevahrada, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. A man having bathed in the Jātimātrahrada has (the faculty of) recollecting his former births. Then he should go to the tank (in) the very auspicious Payoṣṇī, the best of rivers. A man engaged in worshipping his manes and deities (there), would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O great king, having reached Daṇḍaka-forest he should bathe there.

40-42. (He should also bathe) after going to the hermitage of Śarabhaṅga, and also of the magnanimous Śuka. He does not meet with a disaster, and purifies his own family. Thence he should go to Sūryāraka, resorted to by Jamadagni. A man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha would obtain much gold. Being controlled and having restrained his diet, he, after having bathed at Saptagodāvarī, obtains great religious merit, and goes to heaven.

43-52. Thence, being restrained and having controlled his diet, a man should go to (the holy place called) Devapatha. He obtains that merit which is obtained by performing (the sacrifice named) Devasatra. Being a religious student and with his senses controlled, he should reach Tuṅgakāraṇya where formerly the eloquent one taught the sages the Vedas that were lost. The son of the sage Aṅgiras formerly sat on the upper garments of the great sages, O descendant of Bharata. Due to Oṁkāra that was properly and correctly pronounced, that which was repeated (-ly thought) by a sage stood before him. There, the sages, the gods, Varuṇa, Agni, Prajāpati, god Hari Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), Śiva, also the revered and very lustrous Brahmā, along with the gods appointed the very lustrous Bhṛgu to officiate as a priest at the sacrifice. Then the revered one settled all the sages according to the rite as observed by the gods and in the proper manner (in their proper positions). Gods and sages properly pleased by (their) portion of ghee went happily to the three worlds. O best king, the sin of a person—a woman or a man—who enters that forest, suddenly perishes. A wise man being controlled and with his diet restrained, should stay there for a month.

(Thereby) he would go to Brahmā's world and again purifies his family (also).

53-57a. Having reached Medhāvana, a man should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he gets (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice), and also memory and intelligence. Having gone to Kālañjara there, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O king, he should practice self-control on the Kālañjara mountain. The man is honoured in heaven. There is no doubt about it. Thence, O lord of people, having reached the river Mandākinī, that frees (people) from sins, on Citrakūṭa, the best of the mountains (he should bathe there). A man who bathes here and is engaged in worshipping manes and deities obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice, and goes to the best position (i.e. salvation).

57b-62a. O lord of kings, thence he should go to the excellent Guhasthāna, where god Mahāsena (i.e. Kārtikeya) is always present, O king. O best of men, a man attains perfection merely by going there. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha obtains the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows. Turning right, a man should go to Yaśaḥsthāna. Having gone to Mahādeva, he shines like the moon. O best of the Bharatas, there is a well-known tank where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, the four oceans dwell. O lord of kings, a man having bathed and circumambulated there, and being restrained and purified would go to the best state (i.e. salvation).

62b-64a. O best of Kurus, thence he should go to the great Śṛṅgaverapura where formerly the very wise Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, crossed (the river). A man observing chastity and with his senses controlled, has his sins shaken off and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya after bathing in Gaṅgā.

64b-100. Thence he should go to the place of the intelligent god. Having approached Mahādeva, and having worshipped him, and having circumambulated, O king, a man would become the chief of the attendants of Śiva. O lord of kings, a man should thence go to Prayāga which is extolled by the sages, where gods like Brahmā and others, the quarters with the lords of quarters, the regents of the quarters, siddhas, the devoted manes, sages led by Sanatkumāra, also nāgas, suparṇas, siddhas, celibates, rivers, oceans, gandharvas, celestial nymphs (stay),

and also the revered Viṣṇu led by Brahmā stays. There are three tanks. Among them (flows) Gaṅgā, honoured by the Holy Places and going beyond Prayāga. At that place, Yamunā, Sun's daughter, purifying the world, and well-known in the three worlds, has joined Gaṅgā. The buttocks of earth are said to be between Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The sages know Prayāga to be the end of the buttocks, i.e. the lap. Prayāga has Pratiṣṭhāna (so also) both Kambala and Aśvatara. Similarly the holy place Bhogavatī is the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there Vedas and sacrifices, being embodied, wait upon Prajāpati ; and the highly innocent sages and sovereigns offer sacrifices to gods, O king. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing holier than that in the three worlds. O lord, Prayāga is superior to all holy places due to its glory. By hearing about that holy place, by mentioning its name, or by bowing (his) head (before it), a man is freed from all sins. He, of a severe vow, who bathes there at the confluence, obtains great religious merit of the Rājasūya and horse sacrifice. This is the place of sacrifices of the gods. The story about it (is) : O descendant of Bharata, whatever little is given there, becomes great. Even by the words of gods or of people, you should not disregard your thought of dying at Prayāga. There are ten thousand holy places, and others sixty crores in number, the presence of (all of) which is said to be here only, O descendant of Kuru. A man, who bathes at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gets the same religious merit as accrues to one who has studied the four Vedas, or to those who speak the truth. Then there is the excellent holy place Bhogavatī of (i.e. sacred to) Vāsuki. He, who bathes there, would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. There is the holy place (called) Haṁsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. There is also (the holy place called) Daśāśvamedhika on (the bank of) Gaṅgā, O descendant of Kuru. Here Gaṅgā has come down as at Kurukṣetra. A speciality is—at Kanakhala Prayāga becomes (a) great (holy place). If after doing a hundred bad deeds a man resorts to Gaṅgā, the water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all those (sins) as fire burns fuel. The water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all that as fire burns a heap of cotton. Every (holy place) is auspicious in Kṛtayuga ; Puṣkara is said to be so in Tretāyuga. Kurukṣetra is said

to be so in Dvāparayuga, and Gaṅgā in Kaliyuga. One should practice penance at Puṣkara and he should give a gift at Mahālaya. One should get onto (i.e. enter) fire at Malaya and anāśana(?)at Bhṛgutuṅga, and the water of Gaṅgā at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra and the places in between (madhyageṣu ?). A creature (thus) instantly liberates seven preceding and seven succeeding (members of his family). Gaṅgā, by her (mere) mention purifies sins; by being seen gives merit; by bathing (in the stream) and drinking her water she purifies the family up to the seventh member. O king, as long as the bone of a man touches the water of Gaṅgā, the man is honoured in heaven. As (already) mentioned, having resorted to the auspicious places and holy places, a man, obtaining religious merit, becomes a resident of the other world. "There is no holy place like Gaṅgā, there is no god greater than Viṣṇu, there is none superior to brāhmaṇas." Thus spoke the Grandsire. That region, up to the limit of a yojana, where (i.e. through which) Gaṅgā flows, should be known as the region of siddhas (as) it has resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā. This is the truth in the minds of the twice-born and the good. A man should mutter (about) liberation into the ear of a viruous man or a follower. This is meritorious, this is pure, this leads to heaven, this gives happiness. This is the most holy, purifying, excellent way of life. This is the secret of the sages, which frees (a person) from all sins. Having studied in the midst of brāhmaṇas, he should secure purity. It is glorious, it leads to heaven, it is very meritorious, it puts an end to (one's) enemies, it is auspicious. The description of the multitude of holy places is the best producer of intelligence. A man having no son gets a son. A poor man would obtain wealth. A king conquers the earth. A vaiśya would obtain wealth. A śūdra obtains his desired objects, and a brāhmaṇa who recites (the Vedas) masters them. He who would daily listen to this meritorious (account of) the holy places, which is always pure, obtains the (faculty of) recollecting his former births and rejoices in heaven.

101-106. I have described the holy places that are accessible and that are inaccessible. With a desire to visit all the holy places a man should even go to them mentally. (Visits to) these were undertaken by Vasus, Sādhyas, Ādityas, Maruts, Aśvins,

sages like gods, desiring merit. O you descendant of Kuru, O you of a good vow, you too visit the holy places in this manner. Merit enhances by merit. The holy places are reached through piety and through the knowledge of the scriptures by the good people, whose senses are purified, and who follow the wise. A man who is not one who has not done (good) deeds, who is not foolish, who is not impure, who is not a thief, whose mind is not crooked (alone) bathes at the holy places, O descendant of Kuru. O dear one, you of a proper conduct, and always observing piety, have always gratified your manes and all paternal great-grandfathers, and all gods led by Brahmā and along with groups of sages.

Vasiṣṭha said:

107. You, O pious one, have always pleased (these) by means of your righteousness. On the earth you will obtain great, eternal fame like Dilīpa.

Nārada said:

108. Speaking thus and advising (Yudhiṣṭhira), the revered sage Vasiṣṭha, being pleased, disappeared there only with a pleased mind.

109-123. O best of the Kurus, by perceiving the truth of the sacred treatises and by the words of Vasiṣṭha, Dilīpa crossed the earth. O glorious one, the very meritorious pilgrimage, freeing one from all sins, is effective in (i.e. by visiting) Pratiṣṭhāna. He who wanders over the earth in this manner, enjoys after death the entire fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O king, you will obtain eight times the excellent merit which formerly king Dilīpa had secured, O son of Kuntī. Since you will lead the sages, you will have eightfold fruit. O descendant of Bharata, these sacred places are crowded with the hosts of demons. O descendant of Kuru, nobody except you can have an access (to these places). He who, getting up at daybreak, would recite this account of the divine sages, depending on all the holy places, is freed from all sins. The principal sages like Vālmīki and Kaśyapa, Ātreya and Kauṇḍinya, Viśvāmitra and Gautama, Asita and Devala, Mārkaṇḍeya and Gālava, also

Bharadvāja's disciple, sage Uddālaka, Śaunaka with his son, Vyāsa the best among the ascetics, the best sage Durvāsas, Jābāli of great penance—all these best sages, with penance as their wealth, deserve to be respected by you. O glorious one, with them go to these sacred places. You will obtain great fame like king Mahābhiṣa. O best among the Kurus, with your righteousness you shine like the pious Yayāti or like king Purūravas, like king Bhagīratha or like Rāma, who was well-known. As formerly (Indra), the killer of Vṛtra, and the king of gods, burnt (i.e. destroyed) all his enemies, and being free from distress, protected the three worlds, so you will protect your subjects after destroying your enemies. O lotus-eyed one, having obtained the earth secured by your good works, you will obtain fame like Kārtavīrya Arjuna.

Sūta said:

124-127. Having spoken like this, and having advised holy great king, the revered sage Nārada disappeared there only. The lord of the earth, Yudhiṣṭhira, of a good vow, respectfully visited along with the sages all the sacred places. O all sages, he who would recite or listen to the account about the pilgrimage told by me, becomes free from all sins. I have told you the entire fact. What more do you want to hear ? There is nothing that cannot be told by me about the sages of pious fame.

CHAPTER FORTY

Mārkaṇḍeya Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-5. O you of good vows, I have thus described the holy places, the bodies of Viṣṇu. A man becomes liberated by contact with any one of these. To hear about the holy places is blessed; to resort to the holy places is blessed. In Kaliyuga, there is no other means for destroying the heap of sins. He who

everyday says, 'I will stay at a holy place; I will bathe at a holy place', goes to the highest principle. By his merely talking about the holy places his sins perish. O you of best vows, the holy places resorted to by the blessed ones are indeed blessed. By resorting to the holy place only, Nārāyaṇa, the author of the world is worshipped. There is no higher place than the holy places.

6-11. Men should always without fail worship a brāhmaṇa, tulasī (-plant), aśvattha, collection of holy places, and the greatest lord Viṣṇu. O best sages, the seniors look upon worshipping the brāhmaṇas especially as superior to bathing at all the sacred places. Therefore, a wise man should everyday resort to the auspicious feet of a brāhmaṇa, which are full of all sacred places. They are superior to holy places. One should circumambulate aśvattha (tree), tulasī (plant) and cows. Obtaining the fruit of (visiting) all holy places he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. Therefore, a man should destroy (the fruits of) his evil deeds by resorting to a holy place. Otherwise he goes to hell and becomes calm only after exhausting (the fruits of) his acts. Sinners live in hell. A meritorious person obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven. Therefore, a wise man should resort to an auspicious, holy place.

The sages said:

12-13. O you of a good vow, we have heard about the holy places along with their greatness. Now we desire to hear the distinguishing features of Prayāga. O Sūta, since you formerly described Prayāga in brief, (now) we desire to hear about it in detail. O Sūta, please describe it to us.

Sūta said:

14-30. O illustrious ones of good vows, you have well asked about Prayāga. I shall gladly give you a description of Prayāga, which was formerly narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya to the son of Pāṇḍu. When the Bhārata (war) was over, and Pṛthā's son (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) had obtained the kingdom, for some time, king Yudhiṣṭhira, Kuntī's son, was tormented by the grief (i.e. the bereavement) of his (cousin-) brothers, and thought again and

again: 'King Duryodhana was the lord of eleven divisions of the army. All those (Kauravas), having frequently tormented us, are dead. (We) the five Pāṇḍavas, having resorted to Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), have survived. (How did we kill) Droṇa, Bhīṣma, very mighty Karṇa, and king Duryodhana with his brothers and sons? All the kings, thinking themselves to be brave, have been killed. What is the use of the pleasures or of life without the kingdom? Alas, (what a misery) !' Thinking likethis the king was distressed. Motionless and devoid of energy he remained with his face a little bent down. When the king regained consciousness, he repeatedly thought: 'Which course or vow should I practice? or which sacred place—bathing where a man goes to the world of Viṣṇu (should I resort to) by which I shall be free from the blemish due to the great sin (of killing my kinsmen)? How shall I ask Kṛṣṇa who got the great thing done? How shall I ask Dhṛtarāṣṭra whose hundred sons are killed? How shall I ask Vyāsa whose family has met with destruction?' In this way Dharma's son Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed. All the (other) Pāṇḍavas wept due to being distressed by the grief of their brother. The noble ones who had resorted to the Pāṇḍavas and who had gathered there also (wept). Kuntī, Draupadī and others that had gathered there, fell on the ground on all sides and wept. Mārkaṇḍa was at Vārāṇasī. He came to know that Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed, weeping and very unhappy. In a very short time Mārkaṇḍa of great penance reached Hastināpura, and stood at the gate of the royal palace. The doorkeeper too, having seen him, quickly reported (his arrival) to the king. "The sage Mārkaṇḍa, desiring to see you, stands at the gate." The son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) quickly came to the door, and eagerly said:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

31-33a. Welcome to you, O you highly intelligent one. Welcome to you, O great sage. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is purified. O great sage, when you are seen today, my dead ancestors are gratified.

Having seated him on the throne, the noble Yudhiṣṭhira honoured that sage with (giving water for) washing his feet, for purifying himself, and by offering worship to him.

33b-34. Then Mārkaṇḍa said to him: "O lord, I am honoured by you. O king, tell me quickly why you hastened. Tell me why you are distressed."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

35. O great sage, knowing what occurred to us for (securing) the kingdom the holy one has come here.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

36-38. O king, of mighty arms, hear. Where Dharma (i.e. righteousness) is well-settled there no sin is seen in the case of a wise man resorting to fighting on the battlefield, especially in the case of a kṣatriya (fighting) in accordance with his duty? Bearing this in mind, you should not think (that you have committed) a sin.

Then king Yudhiṣṭhira, saluting the sage by (bowing down) his head (said): "O sage, I am asking you who always (directly) see the three times. Tell me in brief (that) by which I shall be free from the blemish."

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

39-40. O illustrious king listen, since you ask me. Thus Sāṁkhya, Yoga, and the sacred places have been narrated; O lord, again the holy brāhmaṇas have formerly declared that going to Prayāga is best for men doing righteous deeds.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Greatness of Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O revered sir, I desire to hear how in the former kalpa men went there to Prayāga. What is the course of (i.e. for) the dead there? What is the fruit which those who bathe there get?

Tell me also the fruit which those who stay in Prayāga get. Tell me all this. I have great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-22. O lord, O dear, I shall tell you what is desirable, and what is (its) fruit, which I heard while being told to brāhmaṇas and sages in olden days. From Prayāga, Pratiṣṭhāna, up to Dharmakī Vāsukī pool, there are the two nāgas. This is the region of (i.e. sacred to) Prajāpati, which is known in the three worlds. Having bathed here men go to heaven. Those that die here are not reborn. There gods like Brahmā, having come together protect (everything). There are many other holy places which destroy all sins. O king, it is not possible to describe them even by (spending) many hundred years. I shall give you the description of Prayāga in brief. Sixty thousand bows protect the Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā). The Sun with the seven horses always protects Yamunā. Indra himself particularly protects Prayāga. Viṣṇu, along with the gods, protects the highly esteemed region. Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), with the trident in his hand, always protects that (famous) Vaṭa. The god protects the auspicious place which removes all sins. Men given to impiety do not go to that place. O king, all that sin—small or smaller—of a man who remembers Prayāga vanishes. A man, merely by seeing that holy place, or even by uttering its name, or even by taking clay from there, is free from sin. O lord of kings, there are five pools in (i.e. through) which Gaṅgā (flows). The sin of a man goes away the moment he enters Prayāga. A man who remembers Gaṅgā within a distance of thousands of yojanas, gets the highest position (i.e. salvation), even if he is a man of wicked deeds. By reciting (the name of Gaṅgā) a man is free from sins. By seeing (her) he sees (i.e. gets) happiness. By bathing in and drinking (the water of Gaṅgā) he purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). A man who is truthful, who has conquered his anger, who has greatly resorted to harmlessness, who follows the proper course of conduct, who knows the truth, who is engaged in the well-being of cows and brāhmaṇas, is freed from sin after bathing in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. He properly obtains many objects that he has thought of in his mind. Thence having gone to Prayāga, he

should live there with restraint for a month and should offer oblations to gods. (Thereby) he gets his desired objects and is everywhere born in a high family. God Maheśvara is always actually present where the illustrious goddess Yamunā, the daughter of the Sun, well-known in the three worlds, goes. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the auspicious Prayāga is difficult to be reached by human beings. O lord of kings, having bathed there, gods, demons, gandharvas, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, are honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Importance of Giving a Cow at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-24. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, going where, a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. Except Prayāga, there is absolutely no eternal place for the afflicted and the poor who are of a firm resolve. A man who having reached the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, would cast his life, goes in an aeroplane having the colour of heated gold and resembling the sun, (and) rejoices in heaven in the company of gandharvas and celestial nymphs. The best sages say that (such) a man obtains desired objects. He rejoices with all auspicious things, divine and full of gems, is accompanied by various flags and surrounded by excellent damsels. He when asleep is awakened by the sound of songs and musical instruments. As long as he does not call to mind (his earthly) existence (or life), he is honoured in heaven. Then deprived of heaven, having fallen from there due to the (fruit of) his deeds being exhausted, he is born in a rich family full of (i.e. accomplished with) gold and gems. He recollects that holy place, and merely by remembering it he goes there. The best sages say that a man, being in a region or in a forest or in a foreign country, or in his own house, who would cast his life (there) by just remembering

Prayāga, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, where the golden land is full of all desired objects, and to which world the seers and sages go. Due to the deeds done by him in this world a man rejoices along with the sages on the charming, auspicious bank of Mandākinī crowded with thousands of women. In heaven he is honoured by siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas and deities. Then fallen from heaven, he would be a lord in Jambudvīpa. Then repeatedly thinking about auspicious deeds, he undoubtedly becomes virtuous and endowed with wealth in this world. He who is well-settled in truthfulness by deeds, speech and mind, and gives gifts in between (the region of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā (gets liberation). He, who accepts gold, jewels, pearls or grains at his own rite or in honour of the manes, or in the worship of deities, has his visit to the holy places rendered fruitless as long as he gets the fruit of that (i.e. accepting gifts). Thus a man should not accept (gifts) at a holy place and a sanctuary. A twice-born should be careful about all omens. He who gives a tawny, red-coloured, golden-horned, silver-hoofed milch-cow with a piece of cloth round her neck (to a brāhmaṇa) at Prayāga (gets liberation). Having properly secured at Prayāga a learned, good, tranquil, pious brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas, and wearing white garments, that cow should be given to him at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. Costly garments, various jewels (should also be given). The man (who gives such a gift) is honoured in heaven for as many thousand years as there is hair on the limbs of the cow, O best one. The cow is born there where he is born. Due to that act he does not see (i.e. go to) horrible hell. Having reached Uttara Kuru, he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. (Instead of giving) hundreds and thousands of bulls he should give one milch-cow. One cow would liberate sons, wife and servants. Therefore, of all gifts, the gift of a cow is the best. In a terrible, insurmountable difficulty due to a horrible sin, a cow alone protects (a man). Therefore (a cow) should be given to a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

The Fruit of Visiting Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, as you have narrated the greatness of Prayāga, I am undoubtedly being freed from sins.

2. O revered one, in what manner should people of religious resolve go (there)? O great sage, tell me about the rite which is declared (to be performed) at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-27. O dear, I shall tell you the entire sequence of the religious rites to be performed during the pilgrimage. O best of Kurus, I will tell you the fruit accruing to him who mounted upon a bull goes to Prayāga united with gods. Due to the anger of bull he lives in a terrible hell. From such a man his dead ancestors do not accept water (offered by him); but he who would bathe his sons and all children and would make them drink (water at the holy place) like himself and would cause gifts to be given to brāhmaṇas (is liberated). A man who, due to his desire for (showing off) his affluence or to delusion, would go (to a holy place) in a vehicle, his (visit to the) holy place is fruitless. Therefore, a man should avoid (going in) a vehicle. He who (in the region) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gives his daughter (in marriage) according to the Ārṣa form of marriage and according to his wealth, does not see (i.e. go to) a terrible hell due to that deed. Having gone to Uttara Kuru he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. He obtains sons and wife that are pious and endowed with righteousness. There he should give gifts in accordance with his wealth. There is no doubt that due to the fruit of (the visit to) the holy place only, he prospers. O lord of kings, he stays in heaven till deluge. He who having resorted to the root of the Vaṭa (tree), would cast his life, goes to Rudra's world after having crossed all (other) worlds. There the twelve suns resorting to Rudra shine. They completely burn the entire world. (Only) the root of the Vaṭa (tree), where, when the world is (but) one ocean, when the moon, the sun, and the wind have perished, Viṣṇu born again and again, sleeps, is not burnt. Gods, demons,

gandharvas, sages, siddhas, cāraṇas always resort to that holy place on the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. O lord of kings, they go there. It is united with Prayāga. There gods like Brahmā, quarters and lords of quarters, regents of quarters, sādhyas, the manes liked by people, and also great sages led by Sanatkumāra, and other brāhmaṇic sages like Aṅgiras, also nāgas, siddhas, suparṇas, those moving in the sky, rivers, oceans, mountains, nāgas and also vidyādharas (stay). The revered Viṣṇu led by Prajāpati (i.e. Brahmā) also stays there. O best of kings, Prayāga well-known in the three worlds and (lying) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā is said to be the hip and the loin of the earth. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing more sacred than it in the three worlds. By hearing (the description) of that holy place, even by mentioning its name, or securing the clay from that place, a man is freed from sins. He who, of a severe vow, bathes there at the confluence, obtains the same fruit as Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices) (give). O dear one, even you should not change your mind to go to Prayāga even by (i.e. depending upon) the words of the Vedas, or of the people. O descendant of Kuru, the presence of ten thousand holy places and sixty crore others is here only. He who casts his life at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā follows the same course, as a wise man endowed with abstract meditation and born of good parents follows. O Yudhiṣṭhira, those who have not visited Prayāga, well-known in the three worlds, do not (really) live in the world. Thus seeing that holy place—the highest place—Prayāga, a man is free from all sins as the Moon is from Rāhu.

28-46a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there are the two Nāgas, Kambala and Aśvatara. By bathing there and drinking (water) there, a man is freed from all sins. Having gone to that (holy) place of the wise Mahādeva, a man liberates ten preceding and ten succeeding (generations). Having bathed there, the man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven till deluge. O descendant of Bharata, in the eastern side of Gaṅgā, in the ocean there is a pool (known as) Pratiṣṭhāna, well-known in the three worlds. If a chaste man, with his anger controlled, lives there for three nights, he is freed from all sins, and would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the north of Pratiṣṭhāna, and to the east of Bhāgīrathī, there is

the holy place (called) Haṁsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, a man, merely by bathing there, gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He is honoured in heaven as long as the moon and the sun (last). A man free from jealousy, who would offer oblations of water to his dead ancestors at the large sandy bank called Urvaśīpulina, white like swans, enjoys heaven with manes, O king, for sixty hundred years. There he is always worshipped by sages, gandharvas and kinnaras. Then having been deprived of heaven and having fallen from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he obtains a hundred maidens like Urvaśī. O king, he becomes an enjoyer (i.e. a master) of a hundred thousand cows. He is awakened by the sound of a girdle and anklets. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he gets (i.e. goes) to that holy place again. He who has the seat of the Kuśa grass, who is always restrained and has his senses controlled, would become master of pleasures by eating once a day for a month (at the holy place). He obtains a hundred women adorned with (ornaments of) gold. He would also be the great master of pleasures on the earth up to the ocean. He, the king, becomes the enjoyer of ten thousand villages. Possessing wealth and grains he is always a donor. Having enjoyed many pleasures he again remembers that holy place. A chaste man with his senses conquered and endowed with abstract meditation, having fasted at that charming Vaṭa, would obtain the knowledge of Brahman. He who having secured a holy bath, would cast his life, is honoured in heaven for a crore years. Then deprived of heaven, and dropped from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he is born as a handsome (child) in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls.

46b-57. Thence he should go to Bhogavatī, to the north of Vāsukī. There is another great holy place called Daśāśvamedhaka. Having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He becomes rich with wealth, handsome and diligent. By merely going there he would obtain that religious merit which is there in (i.e. which is obtained by the recital of) the four Vedas, which is the fruit in (i.e. obtained by) those who speak the truth, and the piety that exists in harmlessness. Gaṅgā is like Kurukṣetra wherever a bath is taken in her (stream). She has tenfold virtue of Kurukṣetra (at a place) where she is joined

by Sindhu. That place where the glorious Gaṅgā, having many sacred places and the wealth of penance (flows) should be known as a perfect (holy place). No doubt should be raised about it. She liberates the mortals on the earth, nāgas below, and she liberates gods in heaven. Therefore she is said to be Tripathagā (i.e. flowing in three streams). As long as the bones of a man remain in Gaṅgā, till that time—for thousands of years—he is honoured in heaven. She is the greatest holy place among places, and the best river among rivers. She gives salvation to all creatures, even to great sinners. Gaṅgā is easily accessible everywhere. She is inaccessible at three places: at Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga and at the confluence of Gagṅā and the ocean. Those, who, having bathed there, go to heaven, are not reborn. There is no other recourse like Gaṅgā for all beings whose minds are smitten with sins and who desire a refuge. She who is the (most) pure of the pure (objects), the most auspicious of the auspicious (objects), has fallen from the head of Śiva, removes all sins, and is holy.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Fruit of Bathing in the Confluence at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-20a. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, having heard which a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. That (famous) Mānasa lake is on the left bank of Gaṅgā. Having fasted (there) for three nights a man would obtain all his desired objects. A man obtains that fruit when he remembers the holy place, which he would obtain by giving a cow, land, or gold. A man who, with or without a desire, dies in Gaṅgā, lives in heaven after death, and does not see (i.e. go to) hell. He is awakened by the music of that host of celestial nymphs from his sleep. He goes in an aeroplane to which swans and cranes are yoked. O lord of kings, he enjoys for many years—six thousand years. Then being deprived of

heaven and having fallen from there due to (the fruit of) his acts being exhausted, he is born in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls. There are sixty thousand sixty hundred holy places. They go to the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the month of Māgha. That fruit which one gets by properly giving away a thousand cows is had by bathing for three days at Prayāga in the month of Māgha. He who would practise the vow of the five fires between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā, is defectless in limbs, is free from diseases and has the five senses (intact). For as many thousand years as the number of pores of hair are there on his body, he is honoured in heaven. Then having fallen from heaven he would be the lord of Jambudvīpa. The man enjoying many pleasures resorts to that holy place. He who would enter water at the confluence well-known in the world, is freed from all sins as the Moon eclipsed by Rāhu (becomes free). He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of Soma and rejoices with Soma. Being served by sages and gandharvas he obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven for sixty thousand sixty hundred years. Fallen (from there) he is born in an affluent family. The man who with his head down and feet up would drink (i.e. take in) the flame, is honoured for a hundred thousand years in heaven. Having fallen from there, O lord of kings, he becomes a performer of agnihotra. Having enjoyed many pleasures, the man resorts to that holy place. He who cuts off his body and offers (the pieces of) it to the birds (is honoured in heaven). Hear the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets), who (i.e. whose body) is enjoyed by birds. For a hundred thousand years he is honoured in the world of Soma. Then having fallen from heaven he becomes (i.e. is born as) a pious, virtuous, handsome, learned king, having a very lovable body. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he again resorts to that holy place.

20b-22. On the left bank of Yamunā, and to the south of Prayāga, there is said to be a very holy place (called) Ṛṇapramocana. Staying there for a night, he is free from all debts. He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Sun, and would always be free from debt.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Agnitīrtha, Virañjana, Svargatīrtha etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Having heard this description of Prayāga which you have given, my heart has become very pure. O revered Sir, tell me what kind of fruit (a man gets) by fasting.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-4. O king, O lord, listen to the fruit of fasting which a wise man who has faith, obtains. He becomes one who has no defect in any limb, is free from diseases, and endowed with (i.e. has his) five senses (intact). When he walks, at every step he gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, he liberates his ten predecessors and ten successors in the family. He is freed from all sins and would go to the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

5-6. O pious one, you are illustrious. O lord, (please) tell me (about) gifts. By small, but the best (gift) a man would obtain many virtues (i.e. much religious merit). In this world a man gets (an opportunity to perform) the horse sacrifice due to great religious merit. Please remove this doubt of mine. I have a great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

7-10. O king, O great hero, listen to what formerly Brahmā told in the presence of (i.e. to) the sages, which I heard when it was being told. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. He who enters that region, has (performed) the horse sacrifice at every step. A man who would cast his life (there), liberates all the seven predecessors and fourteen successors of his. Knowing like this, O lord of kings, a man should be full of faith. Men who have no faith and whose hearts are smitten with sins, do not obtain (i.e. reach) the (holy) place Prayāga, fashioned by gods.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

11-12. How would they who through affection, or through greed for wealth have gone under the sway of lust, obtain the fruit of (visiting) a holy place, and how would they obtain religious merit ? O great sage, tell (me) what position will he who not knowing what ought and what ought not to be done, sells all (kinds of) wares, have at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

13-19. O king, listen to the great secret which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, it is told by the self-born god (i.e. Brahmā) that a man who with his senses controlled lives in Prayāga for a month, is freed from all sins. He, being pure and controlled, being harmless and endowed with faith, is freed from all sins, and would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Listen to the fruit that those who murder those who confide in them, get at Prayāga. He should bathe three times a day; he should eat what is obtained by begging. There is no doubt that after three months he is liberated from Prayāga. He who would go on a pilgrimage knowingly, being endowed with all desired objects, is honoured in heaven. He secures a place which is full of wealth and grains. Thus perfect with knowledge he enjoys pleasures. He has liberated (i.e. he liberates) his manes and great-grandfathers from hell. O you who know the essential principle, I have told you, who are again and again asking me piously, the ancient secret for your good.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

20. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is successful. Today, just by seeing you, I am pleased, I am favoured. O religious-minded one, merely by seeing you, I am freed from all sins.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

21. Fortunately your existence is fruitful. Fortunately you have liberated your family. By narrating (the description of a holy place etc.) religious merit enhances. Hearing it destroys sins.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

22. O great sage, tell me about the religious merit (obtained by bathing) in Yamunā. Tell me all this as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

23-26. (The place) where Yamunā, the illustrious goddess, the daughter of the Sun, and well-known in the three worlds, has come (is holy). Yamunā goes (i.e. flows) along the same course as Gaṅgā has flowed out. Merely by mentioning her (name) within (a distance of) thousands of yojanas she destroys sins. Having bathed in that Yamunā and having drunk (her water), (and) by mentioning (her name) a man obtains religious merit, and by seeing her he sees (i.e. gets) good fortune. When (a man) bathes (in her stream) and drinks (her water), she purifies the family up to the seventh (descendant). He who casts his life there, goes to the highest position (i.e. salvation).

27-32a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there is (a holy place) called Agnitīrtha. To the west is the holy place of Dharmarāja known as Haravara. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there are not reborn. Thus there are thousands of holy places on the right bank of Yamunā. I shall tell you (about those that are situated) on the left (bank). Of the magnanimous Āditya the holy place is Virañjana, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods along with Indra, always offer the daily prayer. Gods and other wise men resort to that holy place. Having great faith take a bath at the holy place. There are many other holy places. All remove sins and are auspicious. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there, are not reborn.

32b-36. The fruits of both Gaṅgā and Yamunā are equal. Gaṅgā is worshipped everywhere merely by her being senior. Thus, O son of Kuntī, have a bath at Svargatīrtha. Just at that moment (when a man bathes there), the sin committed by him during his life, perishes. He who getting up at daybreak recites or listens to (the description of the holy place), is freed from all sins, and goes to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

More about Merits Derived from Pilgrimage

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-5. I have heard what Brahmā told and what gives religious merit, in the Purāṇa. There are thousands and hundreds and millions of holy places. All these are auspicious and pure and (are) said (to lead to) the highest position. Naimiṣa is meritorious on the earth and Puṣkara in the Intermediate Space; so also is Prayāga for the people, and Kurukṣetra also excels. How do you praise one (only) leaving all (others)? This is said to be unauthoritative, unbelievable and not good. How do you speak approvingly of divine and highest position, and pleasures as desired, and great merit through little yoga? Tell me about (i.e. remove) this doubt of mine according as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

6-14a. What is unbelievable should not be told. It may be actually seen by a man having faith (but) with his mind smitten with sin. One who has no faith, one who is impure, one who has given up auspicious practices—all these are sinners. Therefore I spoke (like) this. Listen to (the description of) the greatness of Prayāga, as seen and heard about (by me). There will be (i.e. it will contain) what is seen and not seen and any other possible facts, O king, which I formerly saw or heard about. One's application (or path) is honoured (only) after regarding the sacred texts as authoritative. There (i.e. while doing so) (if) someone else is afflicted, one should not have (recourse to) such a path. Men obtain (the right) path after thousands of births, since by a thousand applications men obtain the (right) path. He who gives all jewels to brāhmaṇas (obtains yoga), (for) by that gift given (to brāhmaṇas), men obtain application. All this happens in the case of him who dies at Prayāga, and not otherwise. I shall tell principally to them who have faith, O descendant of Bharata. Since it is seen in all beings, everywhere, Brahman is not something which can be described.

14b-18a. As Brahman is worshipped among all beings everywhere, in the same way Prayāga is worshipped by the wise in all the worlds. (It) is worshipped (like this). O Yudhiṣṭhira, this is the truth about the lord of holy places. Even Brahmā always remembers Prayāga, the best holy place. Having reached (this) lord of the holy places he does not desire anything else. Who, having obtained godhead, desires manhood? From this inference only, O Yudhiṣṭhira, you will know whether I have told you what is meritorious or non-meritorious.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

18b-19a. I have heard what you told. I am repeatedly amazed. How can it be attained by yoga and heaven by (one's) acts? He gets pleasures and (comes to) the earth as the fruit of (certain) acts. I am asking about those acts due to which he again gets (i.e. comes to) the earth.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

19b-26. O king, hear by which acts (he comes to) the earth. O king, such men as censure a cow, fire, brāhmaṇa, sacred texts, gold, water, women, mother, father, do not have an upward going. Thus spoke Prajāpati. Thus yoga is had. The (highest) place is very difficult to obtain. The men who commit sins go to terrible hell. Those who first take away an elephant, a horse, a cow, a bull, jewels, pearls, gold in the absence (of the owner), and later give gifts, do not go to heaven, where the donors enjoying pleasures (live). The mean ones united with (i.e. doing) such acts are roasted in hell. Thus O Yudhiṣṭhira, (I have told about) yoga, pious acts and a donor. Whether it is true or not, or whether its fruit is there or not, I shall offer the explanation, so that he can on his own obtain (them).

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Prayāga Again

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-5. O king, hear again (about) the greatness of Prayāga. There are many holy places and other auspicious mountains like Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Gotīrtha, Sindhusāgara, Kurukṣetra, Gayā, and Gaṅgāsāgara. The wise say that ten thousand holy places and thirty crore others are always situated at Prayāga. There are three fire-vessels, from which Gaṅgā, led by all (other) holy places has set out from Prayāga. The goddess (Yamunā), the daughter of the Sun is well-known in the three worlds. Gaṅgā causing people to enjoy, stays (here) with Yamunā.

6-11. Prayāga, said to be the hip of the earth, is in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The thirty and a half crores which Vāyu has proclaimed, do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) even its sixteenth part. Whatever is in heaven, on the earth (or) in the atmosphere—all that is said to be Gaṅgā (only). Prayāga, Samādhisthāna, the two (nāgas) Kambala and Aśvatara, and the (holy place) which is (called) Bhogavatī, are the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods and sacrifices are there in an embodied form. The sages having penance as their wealth, worship Prayāga. Gods and kings having much wealth, perform sacrifices (there). None is more auspicious than that in the three worlds, O descendant of Bharata. Due to its prowess, it is more powerful than all (other) holy places, O lord. There are ten thousand holy places and thirty crore other holy places.

12-20. The truth is, that place where the illustrious Gaṅgā is (flowing) is a penance-grove. That (region) which resorts to the bank of Gaṅgā, should be known as the land of siddhas. A man should whisper this into the ears of the twice-born, the good, his own son, friends, or the disciple who follows him. This is blessed, this leads to heaven, this should be practised, this is auspicious, this is meritorious, this is charming, this is holy, this is the best course of conduct. This is the secret of the sages, which destroys all sins. A brāhmaṇa, meditating on it and having remembered it would obtain purity. He who, always being pure

hears about this holy place everyday, obtains (the faculty) of remembering his former briths and rejoices in heaven. These holy places are reached by the good who follow the desires of the wise. O descendant of Kuru, bathe at the holy places. Do not have a crooked mind. Being asked by you, I have properly told it to you. All the manes and the great-grandsires that are liberated do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) (even) the sixteenth part of Prayāga. Thus the (path of) knowledge and (that of) yoga and a holy place, O Yudhiṣṭhira, are secured after great trouble. Then they go to the highest position. People by remembering Prayāga go to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva Dwell in Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O great sage, you have told me all this account of Prayāga. Similarly tell me everything so that it would liberate me.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-7. O king, listen, I shall explain: This whole world is said to be Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśāna, the immutable lord of the deities. Brahmā creates the creatures and whatever is immobile and mobile. The highest Viṣṇu protects them, the created beings, in the world. At the end of a kalpa Rudra destroys the entire world. He neither gives, nor does he accept, and never perishes. He who sees him (to be) the lord of all beings, (indeed) perceives. Now Brahmā is at the north of Pratiṣṭhāna. The highest lord being Maheśvara, remains at Vaṭa. The gods with gandharvas, siddhas and great sages always take care of the highest one. Those who are bent on doing sinful deeds and others (like them) who are (there), do not obtain the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

8. You have told me properly as to what is heard about them. For what reason, do these, dear to the world, remain (here)?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

9-15. These viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva) live at Prayāga. I shall tell you the reason. Listen to the fact, O Yudhiṣṭhira. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. They, who remove sinful deeds, live (there) for protecting (the region). Even the slightest sin (committed) in that the (region) will cause (a man) to fall into hell. Thus, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, along with Śiva (live) at Prayāga. The seven islands, oceans, mountains, supported (by them) remain on the earth, till deluge, O Yudhiṣṭhira, all the other many (objects) that are (there) (in fact everything) beginning with the earth is fashioned by these three deities. This is a holy place of Prajāpati; and is well-known as Prayāga. O Yudhiṣṭhira, this Prayāga is meritorious and auspicious. Rule your kingdom, O lord of kings. Be with your brothers.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Kṛṣṇa Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-3. All the Pāṇḍavas bent upon meritorious acts, along with their brothers, saluted the brāhmaṇas and offered oblations to their (dead) elders and deities. Kṛṣṇa also at that time came there in a moment. All the Pāṇḍavas together honoured that Mādhava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). All the noble ones, along with Kṛṣṇa, consecrated Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, on the kingdom (i.e. the throne).

4. In the meanwhile (i.e. at this time) only, the great-souled Mārkaṇḍeya, then saying: 'May it be well with you', came in a moment to the hermitage.

5. The pious Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, too, along with his brothers, gave him a great gift.

6. He who, getting up at daybreak, recites or listens to this, is freed from all sins and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

Vāsudeva said:

7-17. Do my words (i.e. as I tell you). I am speaking out of affection for you. Being free from affliction at Prayāga, be always engaged in (performing) sacrifices. O lord of kings, O Yudhiṣṭhira, ever remembering Prayāga along with us, you yourself will obtain the eternal heaven. The man who goes to Prayāga, (and) who lives (there), with his soul being purified of all sins, goes to heaven. He who has turned away from accepting gifts, who is pleased, controlled and pure, who is free from self-conceit, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. O lord of kings, so also he who does not get angry, who speaks the truth, and who has a firm resolve, who looks upon (other) beings as himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. The sages, so also the gods have recommended sacrifices according to (proper) order. O king, a poor man cannot (afford) to have (i.e. to perform) a sacrifice. A sacrifice requires many implements, and many activities for its preparation are necessary. It is sometimes obtained (i.e. performed) by various rich or wealthy men. O king, it can be performed by rich, wise men. Then they are united with (i.e. attain) meritorious fruits of the sacrifice. O king, O best of the Bharatas, understand this great secret of the sages. Visiting holy places is meritorious. It is even superior to (the performance of) sacrifices. O best of men, ten crores of holy places, so also thirty crores of other (holy places) will go to (i.e. exist) in Gaṅgā in the month of Māgha. Enjoying the kingdom free from vexation, be comfortable, O great king. O lord of kings, you will, especially as a sacrificer, again see (me).

CHAPTER FIFTY

Viṣṇu's Name the Greatest Holy Place

The sages said:

1-3a. You have told (i.e. explained) all that was asked. Now also we (want to) ask one (thing only). O you very intelligent one, (please) tell it. O you who know everything, tell us what fruit a man would obtain by resorting to these holy places. So also tell us by doing which one act (the fruit of visiting) all (these holy places) is had; tell us if there is such an act.

Sūta said:

3b-4a. O illustrious ones, formerly, beginning with the brāhmaṇa (caste), the worldly and religious rites of various kinds for the castes were prescribed. Only one is superior.

4b-17a. There is no doubt that one who has devotion to Viṣṇu, has undoubtedly conquered (everything). Hari, the lord of the lord of all gods, should alone be propitiated. The goblin of sin would perish by means of the great sacred hymns in the form of the (various) names of Viṣṇu. There is no doubt that those with pure hearts, going round Viṣṇu even once, get (the fruit of) having bathed at all holy places. A man would obtain the fruit of (having visited) all holy places by seeing Viṣṇu's image. Muttering the excellent name of Viṣṇu a man would obtain (the fruit) of having muttered all sacred hymns. A man, having smelt tulasī, the grace of Viṣṇu, does not see, O best brāhmaṇas, the huge and terrible face of Yama. A man, having (but) once saluted Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) does not drink the mother's milk (i.e. is not reborn). I always repeatedly salute them whose mind is (fixed) in the feet of Viṣṇu. Even pulkasas, cāṇḍālas or other mlecha tribes, who serve the feet of Viṣṇu alone are fit to be saluted. Then what about meritorious and devoted brāhmaṇas and royal sages? Having put devotion unto (i.e. being devoted to) Viṣṇu, a man does not see (i.e. experience) confinement in the womb (i.e. is not reborn). O brāhmaṇas, a man who with high sounds (i.e. loudly) utters the name of Viṣṇu, purifies the world as does the water of Gaṅgā etc. There is no doubt that a

man is freed from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa by seeing (the image of), touching (the feet of), reciting (the name of) and devotion (to Viṣṇu). Circumambulating (the idol of) Hari, and loudly uttering his names in a sweet and melodious voice accompanied with clapping of the hands, a man has struck the sin of murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (off) his hands. A man becomes pure by just seeing him who having narrated his story, would listen to a narrative about him. Then, O best sages, how can there be the slightest doubt about his sins?

17b-39. O great sages, Viṣṇu's name is the best holy place of all the holy places. Those who have uttered the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) make the (entire) world a holy place. Therefore, O best sages, they consider nothing more meritorious than this. A man using (i.e. who uses) and holding (i.e. who holds) on his head the remains of an offering of flowers to Viṣṇu, would just become Viṣṇu, the destroyer of grief due to Yama. Undoubtedly Viṣṇu (alone) is to be worshipped and saluted. Those who look upon the great Viṣṇu and the unmanifest Maheśvara as identical, have no rebirth. Therefore, see and worship Viṣṇu only who has no beginning or end, who is the soul (of everything), and who is unmanifest. Those who look upon Viṣṇu and another deity as equal, go to terrible hells. Viṣṇu would not care for them. Viṣṇu, the lord, himself liberates a fool or a cāṇḍāla to whom Viṣṇu is dear. There is none greater than Viṣṇu, the wildfire for (i.e. burning) heaps of sins. A man even after having committed a terrible sin, is freed by the name of Viṣṇu. O you of good vows, god Viṣṇu, the father of the worlds, has put greater strength than himself into his name. Those who, on seeing lesser exertion with greater fruit in this dispute it (its efficacy), go to many hells. Therefore a man looking highly upon Viṣṇu's name, should be devoted to Hari. The lord would protect a worshipper from behind (i.e. secretly), and him who recites his name in the chest (i.e. from the front, i.e. openly). The name of Viṣṇu is a great destructive weapon like the thunderbolt in rending the mountain of sins. His feet are fruitful and move for that (only). The hands that worship him are alone said to be blessed. That head which bends before Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the best part of the body. That is (really) the tongue that extols Viṣṇu. That (alone) is the mind, which

follows his feet. That alone is the hair which bristles at the utterance of his name. Those (alone) are tears that are shed due to Viṣṇu's devotion. Oh, the people are very much duped by their blemishes, (since) they do not resort to (him) by merely uttering his names. Those men also who are sinful due to contact with women, and whose hair does not stand on end at the utterance (of the name) of Kṛṣṇa, are duped. Those are fools who are not pure in mind, and who are afflicted by the grief due to (the death of) their sons etc., weep with various wailings and not at the utterance of the words about Kṛṣṇa. Those who though having got a tongue do not mutter the name of Viṣṇu, easily fall even after having secured the staircase to salvation. Therefore, a man should carefully (please) Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Viṣṇu propitiated with worldly and religious rites, is pleased, not otherwise. The worship of Viṣṇu is said to be a holier place than a holy place. A man obtains that fruit by serving Viṣṇu which he obtains by bathing at and drinking (the water from) all the holy places. Only blessed men worship Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Therefore, O sages, worship Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), who is extremely auspicious.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Karmayoga or Rules of Conduct

The sages said:

1-3. How is that path of action (consisting of worldly and religious rites), propitiated by which Viṣṇu becomes pleased, O Sūta? O illustrious one, O best among speakers, tell that to us. (Tell us about that Karmayoga) by which those desirous of salvation can propitiate the revered lord. Tell us also about that path of action, that protects all the worlds and is the totality of dharma, and of an embodied form, O Sūta. With a desire to hear this the sages have settled in front of you.

Sūta said:

4. Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son was formerly asked in this way only by sages, resembling fire. Hear what Vyāsa said to them:

Vyāsa said:

5-17. Listen, all sages, the ancient path of action which will be told and which gives endless fruits to brāhmaṇas, which is wholly established by the sacred tradition, and which is demonstrated for the brāhmaṇas, which is meritorious, and which is practised by groups of sages. Being attentive, hear when I explain it. An excellent brāhmaṇa, after having the investiture with the sacred thread, should study the Vedas. In the eighth year from conception, or in the eighth year (from birth), (he should have the investiture with the sacred thread) according to the rules in his manual of teaching in ritual. He should have a staff, wear a girdle, have the sacred thread and the skin of the black antelope, should be holy, should eat begged food, should be well-disposed to his preceptor, should always look up at his preceptor's face (to receive orders from him). Formerly Brahmā fashioned the three-stranded sacred thread of cotton and a silken garment for the brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa should always wear the sacred thread, and should always keep the lock of hair on the crown of the head tied. (By doing so) an act done otherwise (i.e. in a perverse way) becomes done properly. He should put on a reddish cotton garment which is not deformed, or an excellent white one made of wool. The upper garment is enjoined to be an auspicious hide of a black antelope. In its absence, the one made of (the skin of) an ox or of that (of the skin) of a ruru (deer) is laid down. Raising the right hand it is placed on the left (shoulder). He should always wear the sacred thread. When the sacred thread is put on (i.e. worn round) the neck it is (called) 'nivīta'. O brāhmaṇas, when the sacred thread is put on the right (shoulder) after raising the left hand, it is (called) 'prācīnavīta'. It is to be employed in (i.e. while performing) the rites (in honour) of the manes. He should always wear the sacred thread in a firechamber, in a cow-pen, in (i.e. while performing) a sacrifice, in (i.e. while practising) penance, while doing self-study, taking food and in the vicinity of brāhmaṇas, while

serving his preceptors (and elders), at the time of the daily prayers, and in the company of the good. This is an ancient rule.

18-24. The girdle of a brāhmaṇa should be made triple, of the muñja-grass and soft. In the absence of the muñja-grass, it is said (to be made of) kuśa-grass with one knot or three knots. A brāhmaṇa should hold a staff of bamboo or palāśa and it should be (high) upto his hair. Or the staff should be made of a tree fit for (being used in) a sacrifice, and should be soft and without a bruise. Being tranquil, a brāhmaṇa should offer the morning and evening prayers. By avoiding it, due to passion, greed, fear or infatuation, he would be (a) fallen (brāhmaṇa). Then, with a pleased mind he should perform the fire-rites in the morning and in the evening. After having bathed, he should offer oblations to gods, sages and the hosts of manes. He should worship the deities with flowers, leaves, barley and water. He should, beingfree from sluggishness, always be inclined to salute the elders religiously bowing down before them, (and saying,) 'I am so and so', for securing a (long) life and good health. The words 'Enjoy a long life', should be uttered by a brāhmaṇa, when he is saluted ; and at the end of his name the sound 'ā' should be pronounced, by protracting the penultimate letter.

25-29. A learned man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who does not answer (i.e. greet back). He is just like a śūdra. The feet of the preceptor should be touched by a person with (the arrangement of) the hands reversed: he should touch the (preceptor's) left foot with his left hand, and right (foot) with his right (hand). Being controlled, and having got worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge, he should first salute him. He should not have borrowed water, flowers and samidhs (the sacred sticks of wood). Such and other things are not (to be used) for (i.e. at the time of) rites in honour of deities. A man should ask a brāhmaṇa about his welfare, a kṣatriya about his good health, a vaiśya about his happiness and a śūdra about his health. (While greeting a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra, the words 'Kuśala, Anāmaya, Kṣema and Ārogya' should be respectively used).

30-35a. The preceptor, the father, the eldest brother, so also one who has protected him from a fear, the maternal uncle, the father-in-law, the maternal grandfather, the paternal

grandfather, one superior by caste, the paternal uncle are said to be respectable persons. The mother, the maternal grandmother, the (brothers and) sisters of the father and the mother, the mother-in-law, the paternal grandmother, the seniormost foster-mother are venerable ladies. O brāhmaṇas, these should be regarded as a group of the venerable ones from (the side of) the mother or the father. Through acts of the mind, speech and body he should obey them. Having seen his elders, he should stand up, saluting them with the palms of his hands joined. For his own sake he should not sit or discuss with them. For life's sake he should never talk hatefully with the elders. Even though excellent in other virtues, a man who hates his elders, falls down.

35b-40a. Out of these, five are to be specially respected: Out of these the first three are the greatest, and out of these (three) the mother is the most venerable. He who desires his welfare, should specially respect, with all efforts, even by casting his life, these five. As long as the father and the mother remain unchanged (in mind or attitude), a son should, giving up everything (else), be attached to them. If, by the good qualities of their son, the father and the mother are well pleased, then, the son would obtain all religious merits.

40b-45a. There is no (other) deity like the mother, and no (other) venerable person like the father. There can never be in their case doing good to them in return. He should always do what pleases them by means of deeds, thought and words. Without being permitted by them, he should not follow any other course of conduct except (in the case of rites having) liberation as their fruit or the obligatory and occasional (rites). The essence of piety is said to be giving an eternal fruit after death. Having properly propitiated the teacher, and allowed by him to go, a disciple enjoys the fruit of his learning after death, and enters heaven. He who slights his eldest brother who is like his father, goes, due to that blemish, to a terrible hell after death.

45b. A husband is (also) always to be respected as he is created as a man.

46-49a. In this world, a man attains greatness by serving his mother. He should stand up and salute the maternal and paternal uncles, fathers-in-law, priests and preceptors, and should

say (i.e. by declaring) 'I am so and so.' A man who is initiated should not be addressed by his name, even though he is younger. A man who is conversant with the rules of conduct should address him beginning with the words 'bho' and 'bhavat' (i.e. you). He should always be saluted, and honoured, by bowing their heads in respect, by brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and by those who desire prosperity.

49b-52a. A brāhmaṇa should never salute kṣatriyas etc. even though they are endowed with virtues like knowledge, (good) deeds, or even though they are highly learned. The scriptures say that a brāhmaṇa (alone) should invoke blessings for all (other) castes. A man of the same caste should salute other men of that caste. Fire is the most venerable to brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa is the most venerable to (all) castes. To a woman the husband is the most venerable. A guest is everywhere the most honourable.

52b-55a. Learning, acts, age, relation and wealth as the fifth—these five are said to be respectable. The preceding one is superior to the succeeding. He who, out of the three castes, possesses (any) of them abundantly and strongly, deserves respect in this world. So also a śūdra who has reached the tenth (decade, i.e. who has crossed ninety). Way (i.e. side) should be given to a brāhmaṇa, a woman, a king and a blind man, an old man, one who is broken down with load, a sick man, and a weak man.

55b-66a. Being controlled and having everyday begged alms from the houses of eminent men, he should, with his speech controlled, eat it after informing the preceptor about it and after being allowed by him. An excellent brāhmaṇa, wearing a sacred thread, should beg food after addressing (the housewife) with the words 'bhavat' 'your ladyship' uttered first. A kṣatriya should beg alms with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the middle of the (sentence), and a vaiśya with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the end. He should first beg alms from his mother, or sister, or his mother's or his own sister, or from one who would not insult him. Begging alms in (i.e. from) the houses of people of his own caste or those of all castes except from the houses of those that are outcaste is prescribed. A celebate who is controlled, should receive alms from the houses of those that are

not bereft of Vedas and sacrifices and are praised in (i.e. for doing) their own acts. He should beg in (i.e. from) his preceptor's house but not from those of his own caste and relatives. If he does not get alms from other houses, he should avoid each former. If alms from these, already described, is not available, he should move in the entire village. Having been restrained, and with his speech controlled, and not looking into directions, he should, having collected the alms as desired, without any fraud, being restrained, with his speech controlled, eat it with a concentrated mind. He who follows a vow, should always live on alms, and should not (take food from) one (place only). The livelihood of him who lives on alms is like a fast. He should always respect his food and not revile it through pride. Seeing it he should be fully delighted, pleased and satisfied. Eating too much causes ill health, lack of (long) life and does not lead to heaven. It is not meritorious; it is hated by people. Therefore, he should avoid it.

66b-68. Facing the east or the sun, he should eat his food. It is an ancient rule that he should not eat food by facing the north. He who is (about) to eat should wash his hands and feet twice. Having sat in a pure place and having eaten the food there, he should twice wash (his hands etc.).

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Rules for Sipping Water

Vyāsa said:

1-19. An excellent brāhmaṇa should again sip water having eaten, or drunk or slept, after walking in a street or having touched his lips after licking them, after putting on a garment, after having ejected semen, or urinated or cleared the bowels, after having told a lie, after spitting, at the beginning of study, after having (an attack of) asthma, so also after having crossed a place where many roads meet or a crematory, at the time of

both the prayers, even though he has already sipped water. Similarly he should sip water after talking with a cāṇḍāla or a mleccha, or with a woman, or a śūdra, or a person who has not washed his hands etc. after eating food, so also on seeing a man who has not washed his hands etc. and on seeing leavings of food, or on seeing tears being shed or bleeding, at the time of taking food, at the time of both the prayers after bathing, having drunk (water etc.), and having come after urination or clearing his bowels or should sip water once after having slept (and then got up), so also for other (similar reasons). On touching fire or cows, or a holy person, so also on being touched by women, he should sip water, so also after having touched a diseased person, grass or ground; so also (he should sip water) on touching his own hair, or on touching a garment that has fallen down. Always desiring purity, he should, with his head or neck covered, or with his hair and the lock of hair on the crown of his head loose, and being seated with his face towards the east or north, sip properly, water that is not hot, does not have hair in it and which is pure. Without washing his feet he would not be pure from (the impurity of having walked over) a path. A wise man should not sip water with shoes on, or while in a carriage or with his turban on; so also with the streams of rain-showers, while standing, or with water drawn out (of a well etc.), or with water made over with one hand and without wearing the sacred thread. So also (he should not sip water) while sitting on a seat; or with his knees outstretched, so also while talking, laughing, seeing (something) or lying on a bed. (He should not sip water) impaired with foam etc. or (water) that is dropped from the hands of a śūdra or an impure person or saline water. (While sipping water) he should not produce sound with his fingers, should not be distracted; (he should not sip water) which is polluted with colours and liquids; so also (the water) from crevices; so also that which is agitated with the hands, or with his shoulders stretched out. A brāhmaṇa is purified when the water reaches his heart, a kṣatriya becomes pure when it reaches his throat; a vaiśya, a woman and a śūdra are purified when it touches (their bodies) from within after it is drunk. The part of the hand situated on the line at the root of the thumb is called Brāhma. The part between the thumb and the fore-

finger is said to be the holy place of the manes. The part below the little is called Prājāpatya. The tip of a finger is said to be divine. The same is called Ārṣa ('of the sages'). The root is daiva or ārṣa, and the middle part is said to be Āgneya (of Agni). The same is sacred to Soma. Knowing this he is not confounded. A brāhmaṇa should always sip with the Brāhma holy place.

20-34a. Brāhmaṇas should offer sacrifices with the daiva and (offer oblations) to the manes with the paitrya (i.e. the portion between the thumb and the fore-finger). Then, being restrained, he should thrice offer water with the Brāhma (portion). Having washed with the root of the thumb he should touch the mouth. With the thumb and the ring-finger he should then touch both his eyes. He should (then) touch the two nostrils with the fore-finger and the thumb. He should touch the ears with the little finger and the thumb. With all of them he should touch the chest, the head and both the shoulders with his thumb. He should drink (i.e. sip) water thrice. By that the deities, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are pleased. This is what we have heard. By wiping Gaṅgā and Yamunā are pleased. When the eyes are touched, the Moon and the Sun are pleased. When he would touch the two nostrils, Nāsatya and Dasra (i.e. the two Aśvins) are pleased. Similarly when the ears are touched, wind and fire are pleased. When the chest is touched all the deities are pleased. By touching the head, that Puruṣa (the highest lord) is pleased. He does not become impure with the water-drops clinging to his mouth; similarly in the case of water-drops clinging to the teeth, he would become pure by the touch of the tongue. There would be no impurity due to the drops which would touch his feet when he makes others sip water. They should be regarded like dust particles. Manu declared that in the case of Madhuparka, Soma, eating tāmbūla, or fruits, roots, sugarcane, there is no blemish. A man might have a thing in his hand, while moving for food or drink; having put that thing on the ground, and having sipped water he should sprinkle water over it. If after taking a golden object a brāhmaṇa would become impure, he should keep it on the ground; and after sipping water, should sprinkle (water over it). By not putting the object on the ground, by taking which he becomes impure, he would

(continue to) be impure (if he does not, after keeping it down, sip water). There would be an option in the case of garments etc. Having touched it he may sip water.

34b-47. If he urinates or clears his bowels, with an object in his hand, in a solitary forest, at night, or on a path full of thieves and tigers, he is not defiled. Putting his sacred thread on his right ear he should urinate or clear his bowels while facing the north during the day, and facing the south during the night. Having covered the ground with pieces of wood, leaves, clods or grass, and having covered his head, he should urinate or clear his bowels. He should not urinate or excrete in shade, a hollow, a river, a cow-pen, a sanctuary, water, on a road or ashes, so also fire and crematory. He should not urinate or excrete on cowdung, a piece of wood, a great tree, meadow, while standing without clothes, the region of a mountain, in an old temple, an anthill; so also into ditches with beings in them, or while going; so also on fire of chaff or pieces of broken jars, and on a highway. So also (he should not urinate or excrete) in a field, a hole, a sacred place or a place where many roads meet, in a garden, near water, on a barren spot with saline soil, and in caves; (he should not urinate or excrete) with shoes or wooden sandals on, or with an umbrella or in the air; (he should not urinate or execrete) facing women, his preceptor, brāhmaṇas or cows, deities and temples or water, while looking at stars or with his back to them; so also by facing the sun, fire or the moon. Taking clay from a mound that would remove the smell, he should carefully purify himself with water that is drawn up. A brāhmaṇa should not take (i.e. use) the clay that is defiled or muddy or from the road or from a barren spot with saline soil, or that has remained after being used by someone else, or from a temple, or a well, a house or water. Then, he should always sip water as told before.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rules of Conduct for a Celibate Student

Vyāsa said :

1-22. Thus endowed with a staff etc. and with purity and (proper) conduct, when called he should study looking at the face of the preceptor. He should always have his hands raised (i.e. should be ready), and should be well-controlled having good conduct. When told by the teacher 'sit down', he should sit facing him. He should not lie, so also should be seated or be eating food, while listening to or talking (with his preceptor). So also he should not remain with his face turned away (from his preceptor). His bed or seat should always be near his teacher (but) downwards (i.e. at a low level). When within the range of the preceptor's sight, he should not sit on a seat as he likes. Even in the absence of his preceptor he should not utter his name. He should not imitate his gait, speech or movement. He should cover his ears, or go to another place from the place where the preceptor is being censured or blamed. Remaining away (i.e. from a distance) he should not honour him, so also when angry he should not honour him, nor when he is near a woman. Being seated he should not give a reply to him; nor should he sit near him. He should always bring for him a jar with water (in it), kuśas, flowers and sacrificial sticks. He should cleanse his body and apply unguents to it. He should never cross over the remains of (flowers etc. used by) him, his bed, wooden sandals or shoes, so also his seat or shadow. He should secure pieces of wood used as a toothbrush etc. and report to him whatever is obtained by him. Without asking him (i.e. his permission) he should not go anywhere, and should be devoted to his well-being and what is liked by him. In the presence of the preceptor he should always avoid yawning, laughing, covering his neck or cracking (the limbs of) his body. He should study at the proper time, when the preceptor is not depressed. He should sit on a seat lower than that of the preceptor or by his side, and with concentration (offer him) service. He should never remain (i.e. sit) on his seat or bed. He should run after the preceptor when he is running; should go (i.e. walk) after

when he is going. On kuśa seats or on a bull, a horse or a camel, so also on a slab or a plank or (while travelling) in boats, he should sit with (i.e. by) the preceptor. He should always control his senses, should control his mind, should be free from anger and pure. He should always use sweet and wholesome words. He should carefully avoid perfumes, flowers, drinks, (other) preparations, pearls, or harm to creatures, so also rubbing his body with unctuous substances, applying pigment to his body, or rubbing it, so also holding (i.e. using) an umbrella. (He should avoid) lust, greed, fear, sleep, singing or playing upon musical instruments, dancing, threatening, abuse, looking at or securing a woman, assaulting another person or wickedness. He should fetch a jar full of water, flowers, cowdung, clay, kuśas (for his preceptor). Everyday he should bring food and alms. Ghee, salt and all that is stale should be avoided. He should never witness dances, and should not long for (listening to) songs. He should not look at the sun, nor should he clean his teeth. Remaining in a lonely place with women is impure, so also talking with śūdras etc. He should not voluntarily take medicine or food left by his preceptor, so also should not excrete or bathe at his will.

23-34. He should never think of leaving his preceptor. If he leaves him through infatuation or greed, he would fall. He should never have malice against him from whom he would get worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge. Manu has said that a preceptor, even though he is arrogant, he does not know what ought and what ought not to be done, he has gone astray, should not be abandoned. A man should behave towards his preceptor's preceptor as he behaves with his own preceptor. Having saluted and being allowed by the preceptor, he should salute his preceptors. Thus he should behave with his preceptor who gives him knowledge; so also with meditating saints, who prohibit him from unrighteous acts and who advise what is beneficial to him. It is excellent for him always to behave in the same way as he behaves with his preceptor, with the preceptor's sons, wife and kinsmen. A wise man should honour respectable persons (even though they are) young. The son of a teacher who teaches deserves respect like the teacher. He should not clean the limbs of the teacher's

son, should not bathe him, should not eat what is left by him, so also should not wash his feet. The preceptor's wife belonging to the same caste, should be honoured like the preceptor. The one not belonging to the same caste should be honoured by getting up (when she comes) and saluting her. He should not apply unguents to the body of the preceptor's wife, or give her bath, or clean the limbs of her body; so also he should not dress her hair. The young wife of the preceptor is not to be saluted by touching her feet. He should salute her (by putting his hands) on the ground, saying, 'I am so and so'.

35-39. Remembering the course of conduct of the good, he should honour his mother's sister, his maternal uncle's wife, his mother-in-law, his father's sister as (he would honour) his preceptor's wife. They are like his preceptor's wife to him. Everyday he should also kindly receive his brother's wife of the same caste. Women related to him through caste should be honoured by staying away from them. He should behave as he behaves with his mother, towards his father's sister, mother's sister, and his elder sister. (Yet) the mother is superior to them. A preceptor should teach the Vedas to a disciple who is thus endowed with good conduct, who is prudent and not deceitful; so also he should everyday teach him religious texts, Purāṇas and Vedāṅgas. A preceptor who does not teach the disciple who has stayed with him for a year, takes the sin of the disciple living with him.

40-44. These ten should be taught (by the preceptor) according to the rule : the son of his preceptor, one who serves him, one who gives him (some other) knowledge, one who is righteous, one who is pure, one who is capable, one who gives him food, one who gives him water and one who is good. These six of the brāhmaṇa-caste, viz. one who has learnt (the Vedas) by heart, one who is not deceitful, one who is very intelligent, one who takes to his teacher, one who is trustworthy, and dear should be taught according to the rule. To these and other brāhmaṇas gifts should be given duly. Having sipped water and being restrained, he should, facing the north, study. Having seized the feet of (i.e. having saluted) the preceptor and looking at his face, he should say : 'O (sir, please) teach me.' He should stop when (the teacher says :) 'Let there be a stop

(now).' Purifying himself and having the points (of the kuśas) turned towards the east, he should, with blades of kuśa grass, wait upon (a deity etc.). Purified by the three (kinds of) prāṇāyāma, he deserves (to pronounce) Oṁkāra.

45-49. O brāhmaṇas, at the beginning and the end (of a rite) a brāhmaṇa should duly honour Oṁkāra. Having first offered respectful offering with the palms of his hands joined, he should undertake instruction daily. The ancient Veda is the eye of all creatures. He should study it daily. Otherwise he loses his status as a brāhmaṇa. He should study the hymns from the Ṛgvda. He (thereby) offers an oblation of milk. When he offers oblations of desired objects to the deities, he pleases them along with gods. (If) he always studies the yajus-formulae, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) curd. (If) he studies sāmans everyday, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) ghee. If he studies (hymns from) the Atharvāṅgirasa (Veda) daily, he pleases the deities with honey. (If he studies) the Purāṇas, religious texts, he pleases the gods with the flesh (-like parts of fruits).

50-58. Resorting to the daily rites in the morning and the evening, after being controlled, he should, being calm, go to a forest and properly study (the) Gāyatrī (hymn). He should daily mutter the Gāyatrī (hymn). (Repeating it) a thousand (times) is best, a hundred (times (is) middle (i.e. next to it), and ten (times is) the lowest. It is called the sacrifice of muttering prayers. The lord (once) weighed Gāyatrī and the Vedas with a scale. The four Vedas were on one side, and Gāyatrī on the other (i.e. both weighed equally). Having first uttered Oṁkāra, then the vyāhṛtis,[1] he should, with concentration and faith, study (i.e. recite) the Gāyatrī (hymn). In the former kalpa, the three ancient, great vyāhṛtis, viz. Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svaḥ, destroying all inauspicious (things), sprang up. Pradhāna (or Prakṛti), Puruṣa, Kāla, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, the three (constituents of

1. Vyāhṛti—A mystic word uttered by every Brāhmaṇa in performing his daily sandhyā-adoration. These syllables are three : Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svar, usually repeated after 'Om' (See Manu. 2.76). According to some, they are seven.

the Prakṛti viz.) Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, are said to be the vyāhṛtis in succession. Oṁkāra is that highest Brahman, and Sāvitrī would be next to it. The hymn has a great propriety, and is said to be the essence of essences. He, who, being restrained, everyday studies this Gāyatrī, the mother of the Vedas, along with its meaning, goes to (i.e. gets) the highest position. Gāyatrī is the mother of the Vedas ; Gāyatrī purifies the worlds. There is nothing greater to be muttered than Gāyatrī. Knowing this one is liberated.

59-62. Commencement of reading the Veda is said (to take place) on the full moon day of Śrāvaṇa, or the full moon day of Āṣāḍha or of Bhādrapada, O best brāhmaṇas. A man, being controlled and calm, should study (the Vedas) at a pure spot for five months and a half, when the sun proceeds to the south. A brāhmaṇa should suspend the Vedic studies in Pauṣa. A brāhmaṇa should study the Vedas in the morning of the first day of the bright fortnight of the month. A man should study the Vedāṅgas and the Purāṇas in the dark fortnight of the month.

63-70a. One who studies (i.e. the student) and so also one who teaches, studying (the sacred texts) carefully, should always avoid these intermissions of study : When the wind blows audibly at night, when a mass of dust (moves) by day, when there is lightning, or when it rains with thundering, or when there is a surge of great meteors. Prajāpati has prescribed untimely intermission on these occasions. When fires break out, one should know that they have come up. (So also) one should know that there is suspension of study when clouds are seen out of season, when there is a hurricane, when the earth quakes, and when the luminaries are eclipsed. These should be looked upon as (times of) the suspension of study, even when it is the season of study. (So also) when fires break out, when there is lightning or thundering. If there is thundering, there would be suspension of study during the remaining night or day. There should certainly be suspension of study in the villages or cities. For those who desire skill in religion, there should always be suspension of study when there is stinking smell, when there is a corpse in the village, and in the presence of a cāṇḍāla, when someone is weeping; so also when it is the time of the cloud.

70b-72a. A learned brāhmaṇa should not even mentally

think of urinating or excreting in water or at midnight; or when he has not washed his hands etc. after taking food, or after eating at a śrāddha, or after having received the fees at a śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual[1]. He should not study the Vedas for three days during the mourning period of the king or impurity (due to eclipse caused) by Rāhu.

72b-85a. As long as he has partaken of food at one place and there is the presence of oiliness on the body of the learned brāhmaṇa, he should not study the Vedas. He should not study while lying or with his legs stretched or with a cloth girt round his legs and knees[2]; so also after having eaten flesh or the food at the śrāddha of a śūdra. Impurity for three nights is declared at the time of (fall of) mist, sound of an arrow, and at the time of both the twilights; so also on the new moon day and the fourteenth day; so also on the full moon day and the eighth day, for commencement or suspension of Vedic studies; so also the collection of three nights at the end of the season, beginning from the seventh day after the full moon. The wise have declared the collection of three days (7th, 8th and 9th) in the months of Pauṣa and Māgha and in the dark fortnights. A man should never study in the shadow of the ślaṣmātaka tree, so also of śālmali or madhūka; so also in the shadow of kovidāra and kapittha. When one who is his student-friend or co-student has expired, or his preceptor is dead, impurity is said to be there for three nights. These flaws are said to be (the occasions for) suspension of study for the brāhmaṇas. During them the demons harm (men). Therefore (a brāhmaṇa) should avoid them. There is no suspension of the obligatory rites or offering the sandhyā-prayers. During the collection of the three days (7th, 8th, 9th) etc., or when the wind is blowing, he should not study a ṛc, or a yājus or sāmans at the beginning of Vedic studies, or at the end of a sacrifice or in the middle of it. There is no suspension of studies of the Vedāṅgas, Itihāsa, Purāṇas, and other religious texts. One should avoid these. This in brief is

1. Ekoddiṣṭa—A Śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual deceased, not including other ancestors.

2. Avasakthikā—A cloth girt round the legs and knees (by a person), when sitting on his hams.

declared to be the course of conduct for a celibate (i.e. a religious student); it was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages who had purified their souls. A twice-born who, not studying the scriptures, strives for something else, is a fool. He is out of the Vedic fold and should not be talked to by twice-borns.

85b-90. A twice-born should not be satisfied merely by the recital of the Vedas. Merely ending his study with the recital of the Vedas, he sinks as a cow sinks in mud. He who duly studies (i.e. recites) the Veda, but does not reflect on its meaning, is a fool, almost a śūdra, and is not a worthy person. If he desires to stay permanently with the teacher, he should, being diligent, serve him till death. Going to the forest he should duly offer oblations into fire. In the same way, being devoted to Brahman and being calm, he should study everyday. Always being devoted, and engaged in eating begged food, he should always study the Gāyatrī, Śatarudriya and especially the Upaniṣads. About the Vedic knowledge this is an ancient statement which I have told you now and which the lord Svāyambhuva Manu, when asked by the best sages, told (them).

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Rules for the Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8a. O brāhmaṇas, having studied one Veda, two Vedas or (the four) Vedas, along with the Vedāṅgas, and having understood their meaning, the best twice-born should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his spiritual teacher. Having given money to his teacher, he should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher with the teacher's permission. Or if he has completed a vow, or has set his mind on the Supreme Soul or is capable, he deserves to perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher (i.e.

should stop his studies). He should hold a staff of bamboo, wear an inner garment, so also an upper one, a sacred thread of two strands, and carry a pot with water, an umbrella, a clean turban, wooden sandals and shoes. He should also put on golden ear-rings and should not wear a red chaplet except of gold. He should always wear a white garment, should always use perfumes, and should be of a pleasing appearance. When he is affluent, he should not wear old garments. He should not wear a red or a thick garment, so also a garment and ear-rings worn by others. So also he should not use shoes, chaplets or (wooden) sandals (used by others); so also the sacred thread, ornament, darbhas, the skin of a black antelope (worn by others). He should not wear the sacred thread allowing it to hang down from the right shoulder, nor he should wear a garment untidily.

8b-12. He should duly secure a wife befitting him and auspicious, so also endowed with beauty and auspicious marks and free from family-blemishes; a brāhmaṇa should have a wife not born in his father's family, (but) born in the family of some other man, and endowed with good character and purity. Till a son is born, he should have intercourse with her during the period favourable for conception. He should carefully avoid (intercourse on) prohibited days: the sixth, eighth, fifteenth, twelfth, and fourteenth. He should always be controlled; similarly he should establish the marriage-fire and should offer (oblations into) fire.

13-21. One who has returned from the house of his teacher should always devise these purifying (practices). Everyday he should carefully perform his rites enjoined by the Vedas. He who does not perform them falls into very fearful hells. Being controlled, he should study the Veda and should not neglect the great sacrifices. He should perform the domestic rites, and also the sandhyā (-prayer). He should form friendship with his equals and superiors; he should always go to a powerful person. He should go to the deities, and should maintain his wife. A wise man should not extol (his) righteous deeds, and should also not conceal a sin. Always being compassionate to all beings he should always bring about his welfare. He should always move, acting like a nobly born person in respect of place, speech and intellect, age, acts, wealth and learning. He should properly

resort to those practices that are enjoined by the Śrutis and Smṛtis and that are followed by the good. He should not desire anything else. He should go along that path of the good, along which his forefathers and paternal grandfather have gone. By going along that he does not get defiled. He should always be devoted to the study of the Vedas. He should always wear the sacred thread. He should speak the truth, control his anger, and should be free from greed and infatuation. The householder engaged in muttering the Gāyatrī (-hymn) and performing śrāddha is liberated.

22-24. He who is engaged in the well-being of his mother and father, who is engrossed in the good of brāhmaṇas, who is a donor, a sacrificer, a devotee of gods, is honoured in Brahmā's world. He should always pursue the three objects of worldly existence, should everyday worship the deities, and being controlled he should salute the gods. He should always give gifts, should be endowed with forgiveness and should be kind. Such a man is called a householder. A man is not a householder because of (his staying) in a house.

25-33a. The characteristics of a brāhmaṇa are: forgiveness, kindness, vijñāna (worldly knowledge), truthfulness, control, tranquility, knowledge about the eternality of the Supreme Spirit. An excellent brāhmaṇa should not especially err in these. Practising the code of conduct according to his capacity, he should avoid what is condemned. Shaking off the snare of delusion, securing excellent yoga, a householder is freed from bondage. No doubt should be raised here. Forgiveness is tolerating the faults of others due to anger and of the nature of ill conduct, violation (of rules), wrath, harm, bondage, killing. Not showing kindness (i.e. sympathy) in one's griefs, (but) showing kindness of heart in the griefs of others—this the sages call kindness. It is the means of religious merit. Having the knowledge of the fourteen branches of learning for (the good of) others should be known as worldly knowledge by which righteousness develops. By studying the branches of learning methodically wealth also is obtained. He should do righteous acts. This is called worldly knowledge. He conquers the world with truth; truth is that highest position, since the wise say that not erring towards the creatures is truth. Abstaining from (the enjoyments

of) the body is control. Tranquility is wisdom due to propitiousness.

33b-36. Metaphysical knowledge is (that of) the immutable one going where he does not grieve. That is declared to be knowledge by which that revered lord, god Viṣṇu is actually perceived. A learned brāhmaṇa who is devoted to Him, who looks upon Him as the highest, who is always free from anger and is pure, who is engaged in (performing the five) great sacrifices obtains that Excellent One. He should carefully protect his body which is the abode of (securing) piety. Men cannot know that highest Viṣṇu without the body.

37-40. A brāhmaṇa, being restrained, should engage (himself) in acts of piety, worldly gains, and love of sensual enjoyments. He should not mentally remember (i.e. think of) worldly gains or sensual enjoyments without (thinking of) piety. Even though he is sinking due to (acts of) righteousness, he should not practise unrighteous acts. Piety is the revered lord, and the (only) resort for all creatures. He should do what is good to (other) beings. He should never think of doing an act of deceiving others. He should not censure Veda and deities, and should not stay with them (who censure Veda and deities). That controlled and pure man who would recite this chapter on piety, or would teach or read out (to others), is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Donṭ's for a Twice-born Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8. (A man) should not harm any creature. He should never tell a lie. He should not speak what is not beneficial or what is not agreeable. He should never be a thief (i.e. should never steal). A creature that takes away (even a blade of) grass, or vegetable, or clay or even water, goes to hell. (Even) if he is poor, he should not accept (anything) from a king or a śūdra or

from one who is fallen or from anyone else. A wise man should (always) avoid censured persons. He should not always be a suppliant; he should not implore the same person again. Doing this the suppliant takes away the life of the wicked one. He, especially an excellent twice-born, should not take away the wealth of deities; even in difficulties he should never snatch away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa. Poison is not called poison. The wealth of a brāhmaṇa is called poison. He should also carefully avoid (taking away) the wealth of deities. Prajāpati Manu has said that (taking) flowers, vegetables, water, wood, roots, fruits, grass which are not offered, is not stealing. A twice-born should take flowers in the act of worshipping deities. He should not always take them from one person only, and without his permission.

9-12. A wise man should openly take away grass, wood, fruits and flowers. This they say is (done for having) religious merit. Otherwise he would be fallen. O brāhmaṇas, a handful of sesamum-seeds, kidney-beans, barley etc. should be taken by those who are hungry while on journey, not otherwise for righteousness etc. This is the correctness of conduct. One should not practise a vow under the pretext of righteousness, after having committed a sin. A twice-born, covering his sins by means of a vow, and deceiving women and śūdras, is condemned after death and here (i.e. in this world) also by the teachers of the Veda. That vow which is fraudulently practised, goes to the demons.

13-21a. He who is not a brāhmaṇa ascetic, but goes about in the guise of a brāhmaṇa ascetic, would snatch the sin of that ascetic, and is born in an animal species. He who begs, has (illegitimate) intercourse with or company of or talks with (women), always falls. Therefore, he should carefully avoid this. He should not plot against deities and preceptors. Plotting against a preceptor is crores of crore times worse than plotting against gods. Scandal and atheism are a crore times worse than that. By means of cows, deities, brāhmaṇas, agriculture, service of a king, those families which are bereft of righteousness lose their status of (good) families. Families also lose their status of (good) families due to bad thoughts, omission of essential ceremonies, and by not studying the Veda, so also by offending

a brāhmaṇa. A family quickly perishes due to falsehood, adultery, eating what is prohibited, and practising what is not enjoined for the family. The family also quickly perishes due to giving (presents) to brāhmaṇas who are not learned, to śūdras and to those who are bereft of the course of conduct that is enjoined. A man should not stay in a village chosen by irreligious people or full of diseases. He should not live in the kingdom of śūdras, or in one that is crowded by heretics.

21b-25a. A twice-born should not live in any other country than the auspicious one between Himālaya and Vindhya and the eastern and the western seas. Or a twice-born should live where a black deer always moves naturally, or where auspicious and well-known rivers (flow), avoiding (the distance of) half a krośa from the bank of the river. Except at an auspicious place he should not stay, nor also near the village of śūdras. He should not stay with the fallen, cāṇḍālas, pulkasas, fools, the arrogant, and others taking abodes with (i.e. depending upon) their wives.

25b-27. These eleven are said to be the faults present in the mixture (of castes): (using) one (and the same) bed or seat, (sitting for taking food in the same) line, (eating from the same) pot, mixing (one another's) food, performing sacrifice for or teaching (low caste people), intercourse or taking food along with (the low caste people), studying together as the tenth, and conducting a sacrifice along with them. Sin would pass on to men even by remaining in their proximity.

28-30a. Therefore with all efforts he should avoid (such) mixture. (The sin of) mixture does not take place in the case of those who, (though) sitting in the same line, do not touch one another and have made a demarcation (between themselves) with ashes. A line is separated by (these) six: fire, ashes, water, by making a mark, by means of a door or a pillar.

30b-35. He should not enter into fruitless enmity, so also discussion, or should not entertain wickedness; he should never report about a cow grazing in someone else's field. He should not remain with a traducer; he should not use stinging words for anyone. A wise man should not tell another person about the sun's halo or the rainbow, the daily religious rite performed by another person, the moon or gold. He should not have hostility

with many and with his relatives also. He should not do to others what is unpleasant to himself. He should not tell about the date (*tithi*) of a fortnight (*pakṣa*); he should not condemn the stars. The best twice-born should not talk to a woman in her menses or a person who is impure. He should not stop what is being given to deities and preceptors (and elders) and brāhmaṇas. He should not praise himself and he should avoid censuring others.

36-42a. He should carefully avoid censuring the Vedas and the deities. O best sages, no expiation for him is seen in the sacred texts, who censures gods, sages or Vedas. The man who would censure a preceptor, a deity, the Veda, a garment, a pillow is roasted in Raurava (hell) for a hundred crores of kalpas. He should keep mum when censure is going on; he should not give any reply. Covering his ears, he should go (away from that place) and should not see him (who censures). A wise man should avoid (discussing) the secrets of others, and also censuring others. He should never enter into a discussion with his own people. The best twice-born should not talk about the sin of sinners or the absence of it. The fault would be equal to the fault due to (not telling) the truth. He would be guilty due to falsehood. The tears of men maligned kill the sons and beasts of the maligner.

42b-75. The wise have observed atonement for killing a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, or cohabiting with one's preceptor's wife; but there is no atonement for the maligner. He should not, without any (proper) ground, see the sun or the moon while rising or setting, or (reflected) in water, or touched (i.e. screened) by clouds, or (appearing) in the middle (of the sky), or screened, or reflected in a mirror etc. He should never see a naked woman or man, urine or excretion, (or a man and woman) united in copulation. A wise man, while impure, should not see the planets like the sun and the moon. With his hands etc. not washed after having eaten food, or covering himself with a veil he should not talk to another person. He should not have contact with a dead body, nor should he see the face of his angry teacher. He should not see his reflection in oil or water, and his wife when she is taking food. He should not see an elephant free from chains, nor an intoxicated one. He should not

eat with his wife, nor should he see her while she is eating, or sneezing, or yawning, or seated comfortably on a seat. A wise man should not see his form (i.e. reflection) in water; and should never cross or stand by the auspicious or inauspicious. He should not offer advice, a dish of rice and peas mixed, milk or curds to a śūdra. A wise man should not give the remains of food, honey, ghee, and the hide of a black antelope and oblations. He should not also tell him a vow or rules of conduct. He should not be under the sway of anger, and should avoid hatred or passion. He should avoid greed, religious hypocrisy, wickedness, jealousy and censure, so also envy, pride, grief and infatuation. He should not inflict pain on anyone; but should beat his son or disciple. He should not serve inferior people, and should never have longing in his mind. He should not look down upon himself, and should carefully avoid low-spiritedness. A wise man should not disrespect a respectable person or himself through ignorance. He should not draw (lines) on the ground with his nails, nor should he sleep on (bare) ground. He should not talk about a river when in rivers, nor about mountains when he is (i.e. has climbed) on them. He should not abandon his co-traveller in an abode or at meals. He should not, being naked, plunge into water; so also he should not cross fire. He should not besmear his body with oil left after anointing his head. He should not play with serpentine weapons; he should not touch the apertures of, or the hair on the private parts of his body. He should not go with a person who is not respectable. He should not resort to wantonness in respect of his hands, feet, speech or eyes, also of the organs of generation or belly. He should not make a sound with the parts of his body or nails; he should not drink water from the cavity (made by joining his hands). He should never strike water with his feet or hands. He should not destroy roots and fruits with bricks. He should not learn the language of mlecchas; he should not drag the foot-stool. A wise man should not suddenly, and without any cause, split, crack, clip or write (with) nails or rub them together. He should not eat food (by keeping it) on his lap; he should not make any movement without any cause. He should not dance or sing or play upon musical instruments. He should not scratch his head with his hands joined. He should not please the deities with popular hymns or of the lord of speech (i.e. Bṛhaspati).

He should not play with dice; he should no run; the should not urinate or excrete in water. He should not sleep without washing his hands etc. after having taken food; he should not always bathe naked. He should not recite while going, nor should he touch his own head. He should not cut off his nails and hair with his teeth; he should not wake up a sleeping person. He should not resort to the morning sunshine; he should avoid the smoke of a dead body (being burnt). He should not sleep in a deserted house; he should not take his own shoes. He should not spit without any cause; he should not cross a river with his arms (i.e. by swimming). He should not wash his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet in fire, nor should he wash in a bell-metal (vessel). He should not open wide (his eyes before) a deity, brāhmaṇas, or a cow, or wind, fire, a king or the sun and the moon. While impure, he should never sleep, or drink, or study, or bathe, or take food or go out. He should always avoid sleeping, studying, bathing, smearing the body with perfumes, taking food or walking at both the twilights or at midday. A twice-born who has not washed his hands etc. after taking food should not touch with his hand a cow or a brāhmaṇa or fire; should not move his feet or should not touch the image of a deity. While impure, he should not touch fire, should not wait upon the deities or communicate with sages. He should not plunge into very deep water; he should not run without a cause. He should not drink water raising (the water pot) with his left hand or by (touching the water pot) with his mouth.

76-94. He should not cross (water) without bathing in it; he should not emit his semen into water. He should not cross an impure (object), an uncovered (object), a worthy object, blood, poisons, or a stream. He should not copulate in water. He should not cut the grove round a sanctuary; he should not spit into water. He should never stand on bones, potsherds, hair, thorns, chaff of grain, charcoal, or dry cow-dung. A wise man should not cross fire; he should never put it down. A wise man should not stir it with his foot or blow it with a winnowing basket. He should not climb up a tree, or being impure, think about (it). He should not throw fire into (another) fire, and should not put it

out with water. He should report the death of his friend to others. He should not use for selling (i.e. should not sell) what is not fit to be sold or what is spurious. A wise man, while impure, should not cause to burn brightly fire with the breath. He should not snatch the boundary line at an auspicious place, or a place of water. He should never break an appointment with a person that has come to him. He should not make beasts, tigers or birds fight among themselves. He should not trouble others by means of water, wind or heat. Causing (the preceptor) to do good things (for him), he should not later deceive his preceptor. For protection he should close tightly the doors of his house in the morning and evening. He should avoid using outside flowers, perfumes, taking food with his wife, or entry after fighting and disputing. A wise brāhmaṇa should not stand while eating, or talk or laugh. He should not touch his (sacred) fire with his own hand; he should not remain in water for a long time. He should not blow into fire with the wings (of a bird), nor with a winnowing basket or hand. He should kindle fire with the mouth. Fire was produced from the mouth. A wise man should not speak to another man's wife, nor should act as a priest at the sacrifice of him who does not deserve to perform it. A twice-born should not move alone, (but) should avoid a crowd. Never should he go to a temple by not turning to the right. He should not squeeze his garments, nor should he sleep in a temple. He should not travel all alone or with unrighteous persons, or with persons suffering from diseases or, with śūdras or with a fallen person, or without shoes, so also without (taking) water (with him). On the road, a twice-born should never cross an animal or funeral pyre. He should not censure meditating saints, siddhas, so also those who practise vows and ascetics. A wise man should not deliberately cross the shadow of a temple, (the images of) deities, sacrificers, brāhmaṇas and also of a cow. He should not allow his own shadow to be crossed by the fallen etc. and the diseased. He should never stand on the ashes of charcoal or hair etc. He should avoid the dust from a broom or the water for bath, for washing garments or from an earthen pot. A twice-born should not eat prohibited eatables and should not drink prohibited drinks.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Do's and Don't's in Eating

Vyāsa said:

1-3. A twice-born should not eat the food of a śūdra through infatuation or longing. He who eats it when it is not a time of distress, is reborn as a śūdra. That twice-born who eats the condemned food of a śūdra for six months, becomes a śūdra even when alive, and after death is born as a dog. O best sages, a man who dies with the food of a brāhmaṇa, or a kṣatriya or a vaiśya or a śūdra in his belly, would get his birth (i.e. would be born as a brāhmaṇa etc.).

4-15. He should avoid the six (kinds of) food: the food of a king, the food of a dancer, the food of a eunuch, the food of shoe-makers, the food prepared for a number of persons in common, the food of a courtesan. He should avoid the food of an oilman, a washerman, a thief, a distiller, so also the food of a singer, a blacksmith, and food (impure due to) a dead person. (He should avoid) the food of a potter or a painter, and of a usurer, or a fallen person, so also of the son of a remarried widow, of the bearer of an umbrella, so also of one who is cursed, so also of a goldsmith, an actor, a hunter, a barren woman and of one who is afflicted; so also (he should avoid) the food of a physician, an unchaste woman and a staff-bearer. (He should avoid) the food of a thief, an atheist, of one who censures deities, of a seller of water, and especially of a cāṇḍāla. (He should avoid) the food of him who is subdued by his wife, or of him whose (wife's) paramour lives in his house; so also (the food) of him who is abandoned, who is a miser, so also of him who eats the remains of the food (eaten by others). (He should avoid) the food of a sinner, the food prepared for a number of people living together, and also the food of a professional soldier. (He should avoid) the food of a frightened person, of a person who is weeping, and food which is inferior and wasted. (He should avoid) the food of him who hates brāhmaṇas (or the Vedas), who takes delight in (committing) sins, so also the food prepared for a śrāddha ceremony, or (for a rite in honour) of the dead, or food that is prepared without any need, so also food (that is impure)

due to a corpse or the food of an afflicted person. (He should avoid) the food of women having no children, so also of an ungrateful man; (he should) especially (avoid) the food of an artisan and also of a dealer in arms. (He should avoid) the food of him who is addicted to liquor, a bell-ringer, so also of physicians; the food of the offspring of a learned man, so also that of the younger brother who has married before his elder brother. (He should) especially (avoid) the food of a widow who is remarried, so also of the husband of a woman who is married twice. (He should avoid) the food that is despised, rejected and (that is prepared) through anger or doubt. He should not even eat his preceptor's food which is not purified. All the wicked deeds of a man are settled in his food.

16-19a. He who eats the food of him (i.e. of a man), eats his sin. A friend who is a half-caste man, or of a low family, a cowherd, a porter, a barber, should be given food among (i.e. along with) śūdras; so also the person who declares himself. A bard, a potter, a peasant should be fed with the śūdras by a wise man noticing (their) little merit. Rice boiled in milk, so also (food) cooked in oil, curds (or butter-milk), barley-meal, oil-cakes, and oil should be accepted by the twice-born from śūdras.

19b-24. (But) he should avoid egg-plant, stalks of lotuses, safflower, gold or silver, onion, garlic, sour gruel, a thick fluid substance; so also chatraka (a kind of mushroom), vidvarāha, greasy milk of a cow during the first seven days of calving, vilaya (a particular product of milk) and mushrooms. By eating the small red variety of garlic, blossoms of kiṁśuka, a gourd, so also udumbara, bottle-gourd, a twice-born becomes fallen. He should also avoid kṛsara, cakes of wheat flour, and milky cakes, flesh (of a beast) not killed at a sacrifice, so also food prepared for deities and oblations, sour gruel, citron fruit, so also fish not killed at a rite; so also he should carefully avoid kadamba-flowers, wood-apple, figs; so also oil-cakes with oil taken out, and the grains offered to gods.

25-29a. At night he should carefully avoid curds with sesamum. He should not eat butter-milk with milk; he should not use prohibited food. He should avoid food impaired by worms, by thoughts, and having contact with earth; he should always avoid food spoiled by worms and insects and (prepared) by a

friend with suffering. He should avoid food smelt by a dog, recooked food and food seen by a cāṇḍāla; so also smelt by a woman in her menses, by the fallen ones or by a cow. He should always avoid the food that is not (properly) collected, stale and scattered; so also food that is touched by crows and cocks and containing worms; so also the food that is smelt even by human beings and touched by a leper.

29b-31a. He should not accept food given by a woman during the menses, an unchaste or a diseased woman, or by one who has put on a dirty garment. He should also avoid (using) another person's garment. Manu has said that the milk of a cow with no calf or a she-goat with a kid not more than ten days old, or of a sheep or a cow who has just taken the bull is not fit for drinking.

31b-46. He should not eat (the flesh of) a crane, a swan, a gallinule, a sparrow, a parrot, so also an osprey, a patridge, a goose, a cuckoo, crows, wagtails, a hawk, a vulture, so also an owl, a ruddy goose, a vulture (or a cock), a pigeon, a dove, a ṭiṭṭibha bird, a domestic cock, a lion, a tiger, a cat, a dog, a pig, a fox, a monkey and a donkey. He should not eat (the flesh of) serpents, deer, peacocks, aquatic animals, land-going animals. This is a settled rule. O best ones, Prajāpati Manu has said that these animals with five claws may be always eaten: alligator, tortoise, hare, rhinoceros, porcupine. He may also eat fish with scales, and the flesh of (the deer called) ruru after having presented them to deities and brāhmaṇas, and not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, so also (the flesh of) a peacock, a patridge, a pigeon, a cātaka, rhinoceros, a crane, a swan. Thus said Prajāpati (Manu). These fish, viz. (the glittering fish) śapharī, siṁhatuṇḍa, paṭhīna and rohita are directed as fit to be eaten. With a desire (to retain the status) as a twice-born he should eat the flesh of these after it is sprinkled over; even if he is about to lose his life he should duly use it. He should not at all eat flesh. He who eats what remains, is not smeared (with sin). If he is weak, he should eat flesh as medicine, or by an order or for sacrificial purposes. He, who would give up flesh when invited at a śrāddha or a rite in honour of a deity, goes to (i.e. lives) in hell for as many years as the number of hair of the beast. The settled (rule) is that the twice-born should not give or drink or

touch or see liquor. Therefore with all efforts he should always avoid liquor. Having drunk it he falls from his rites and would be unfit to be talked to. As long as a twice-born eats and drinks what is prohibited for eating or drinking and does not cast them down, he does not become entitled (to respect etc.). Therefore, a twice-born should, with effort, always avoid articles prohibited for eating and drinking. If he does (persist in eating or drinking) them, he goes to Raurava (hell).

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Acts of Charity Prescribed for a Householder

Vyāsa said :

1. I shall now explain to you the excellent merit of giving gifts, which was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages—the teachers of the Vedas.

2-30. The giving of proper objects with faith to a worthy recipient is designated as 'dāna' and gives the fruit of enjoyment and liberation. I take that to be 'datta' which is given with great faith to deserving persons. The rest he preserves for someone else. Dāna (giving gifts) is said to be of three kinds: obligatory, occasional, and optional. The fourth called vimala (i.e. pure) is said to be the best of all gifts. That gift which is everyday given to a brāhmaṇa who does not oblige and without desiring its fruit is said to be obligatory. That gift which is given into the hands of the learned for the appeasement of sin is said to be the excellent gift called 'occasional'. The sages who have thought about religious merit have called that gift which is given (for getting) a child, success, glory, happiness, as 'optional'. That gift which is given to those who know Vedas, to please the lord, and with a mind full of piety is pure and auspicious. Having secured a worthy recipient, he should, according to his capacity, resort to the merit due to gift. That worthy recipient whom he waits upon, protects him all round. That which is surplus in the food or garments of the family, should be given. If given otherwise, it

does not give the fruit of the gift. He should devoutly give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa, one born in a noble family, one who is modest, one who is practising a vow, and one who is poor. He who devoutly gives land to a brāhmaṇa who has maintained the sacred fire, goes to the highest place, going where he does not grieve. He who gives land with sugarcanes (i.e. land where sugarcanes are growing), so also land with wheat (growing in it), to (a brāhmaṇa) learned in the Vedas, is not reborn. He who gives (a piece of) land, even of the measure of a cow's hide, to a poor brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins. Here (i.e. in this world) there is no greater gift than the gift of land. Giving food is equal to that, and gift of knowledge (i.e. teaching) is superior to that. He who duly gives knowledge to a calm, pure, religious brāhmaṇa is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. A man should every-day give with devotion gold to a brahmacārī 'religious student'. Being freed from all sins, he would obtain the position of Brahman. By giving food to a householder a man obtains (its) fruit. Food alone should be given to him. By giving it the giver obtains the highest position. Observing a fast with his mind controlled, and being calm and pure, he should honour seven or five brāhmaṇas with black sesamum and especially with honey on the full moon day of Vaiśākha (saying), 'May Dharmarāja be pleased'; from the time he has this in mind, all the sin committed during his life time perishes in a moment. He who, having put sesamum seeds or gold, or honey or ghee on a hide of a black antelope, gives them to a brāhmaṇa, overcomes all sin. He who gives food with ghee, a jar with water to brāhmaṇas, especially on the full moon day of Vaiśākha, after having assigned it to Dharmarāja is freed from fear. He who pleases seven or five brāhmaṇas with water pots with gold and sesamum seeds, removes (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Being calm and fasting, wearing a white garment, a twice-born who gives on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Māgha after offering sesamum seeds into fire, sesamum seeds only, to brāhmaṇas, overcomes all the sin that he has committed from his birth. When the new moon day arrives, he should give whatever little (he can) to a poor brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, saying, 'May the ancient god Hṛṣīkeśa Viṣṇu be pleased.' That moment only his sin committed during the past seven births, perishes. He who would,

on the fourteenth day of the dark half, propitiate the trident-holder god (i.e. Śiva) through a brāhmaṇa, would not be re-born. Especially on the eighth day of the dark half, he having bathed and honoured a religious brāhmaṇa should, after washing his feet etc. duly give him his own wealth saying, 'May Śiva be pleased with me.'

31-43. Being freed from all sins, he obtains the highest position. Devoted twice-borns should worship Viṣṇu on the fourteenth day, or especially on the eighth day of the dark half, so also on the new moon day. He who observes a fast on the eleventh day, and would worship Viṣṇu through a brāhmaṇa, would go to the highest position. This day, the twelfth of the bright half, is called Vaiṣṇavī (i.e. sacred to Viṣṇu). On that day (a man) should carefully propitiate Viṣṇu. Whatever is given to a pure brāhmaṇa by dedicating it to lord Viṣṇu only, is said to have inexhaustible fruit. One who desires to propitiate a particular deity should honour brāhmaṇas. By that he would please that deity. Deities always dwell in the bodies of brāhmaṇas. Sometimes, when brāhmaṇas are not available, the deities are worshipped in their images etc. Desiring a fruit from them he should carefully worship the deities in images or especially in (i.e. represented by) brāhmaṇas everyday. He who desires power, should always worship Indra. He who longs for divine glory and knowledge, should worship Brahmā. He who desires good health (should worship) the Sun; he who longs for wealth, should worship Fire. He who desires success in undertakings, should worship Vināyaka. He who desires pleasures, should worship the Moon; he who longs for strength should worship the Wind. He who desires freedom from the worldly existence should carefully worship Viṣṇu. He who desires deep, abstract meditation, liberation and also divine knowledge, should carefully worship Śiva, the lord of gods. Those who desire great satisfaction worship Śiva and Viṣṇu. Giving water gives greater satisfaction than that.

44-55a. He who gives oil, gets desired progeny; the giver of a lamp gets excellent eye. The giver of land gets everything. One who gives gold gets long life. He who gives a house, obtains excellent houses; he who gives silver, gets excellent beauty. He, who gives a garment, lives in the same world as the Moon. The

giver of a horse gets an excellent vehicle. The giver of food gets the wealth desired by him; the giver of a cow obtains the world of Brahmā. The giver of a vehicle or a bed obtains a wife. He who grants fearlessness, obtains affluence. The giver of grains gets eternal happiness; he who gives (i.e. teaches) sacred text, reaches eternal Brahman. A man should give according to his capacity grains also to brāhmaṇas endowed with Vedic knowledge. After death he gets (i.e. goes to) heaven. By giving food to cows he is freed from all sins. By giving fuel a man has his fire kindled. He should always give fruits, roots, drinks and vegetables to brāhmaṇas. He should always be joyful. He who gives medicine, oil, food to a sick person for curing the disease, becomes free from diseases and happy and lives long. A man who gives an umbrella and sandals crosses the path that is sharp like a razor's edge leading to the hell Asipatravana and severe heat. He should give that, desiring that only eternally, to a virtuous person, which is most desired in the world and which is expected in the house. That which is given during the transition of one solstice to another, of the equinoctial point, at the time of the lunar or solar eclipses, or on a Saṁkrānti day etc., becomes inexhaustible. By giving (gifts) at sacred places like Prayāga, or at auspicious abodes, or at (the bank of) rivers and streams, he obtains inexhaustible (fruit).

55b-67. For beings there is no greater religious merit here than giving in charity. Therefore the twice-born should give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa. In the same way he who desires his well-being, he who desires liberation, should give (gifts) to brāhmaṇas for (going to) heaven or for the destruction of his sins. He who, of an irreligious nature, would stop through folly, (gifts) being presented to brāhmaṇas, fire or gods, would go to the womb of an animal. A king should drive him, after forfeiting all his wealth, out of his country, who, having earned wealth, would not honour brāhmaṇas and gods. That brāhmaṇa who, at the time of famine, does not give food etc. to twice-born ones who are dying, stands condemned. (Brāhmaṇas) should not accept (gifts) from him and should not stay with him. The king should find out (facts about) him and drive him out of his country. He who later gives his wealth, the means of religious merit, to good people, is a greater sinner than those (mentioned) earlier, and

such a man is roasted in hell. O best brāhmaṇas, a man should give gifts to those brāhmaṇas who study the Vadas, are learned, have their senses controlled, are endowed with truthfulness and restraint. A man should feed a learned, religious brāhmaṇa, even though he has eaten (his meal), but not a fool, who does not behave properly (though he) has starved for ten days. He who, ignoring a learned brāhmaṇa who has approached him, gives (gifts to someone else), becomes sinful due to that act and burns his family to the seventh (descendant). If there is a brāhmaṇa who is superior in respect of good character or learning, he should exert to give him by bypassing (the brāhmaṇa that is) nearby. He who would accept what is honoured and would give just what is honoured—both these go to heaven; but (if the) reverse (is done) they go to hell.

68-78. A man knowing Dharma, should not give even water to an atheist, a sceptic, so also to all heretics and to one who does not know the Vedas. If a man who is not learned, would accept silver, gold, a cow, a horse, land, sesamum seeds, he is reduced to ashes like wood. An excellent brāhmaṇa should desire to get wealth from praiseworthy brāhmaṇas, even from kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, but never from śūdras. Seeking (i.e. he should seek) the contraction of his livelihood, (but) he should not long for enhancing his wealth. Attached to greed for wealth, he is deprived of his brāhmaṇahood. He would not obtain that position by studying all the Vedas and by fully accomplishing sacrifices, which he would obtain through contentment. He should not have a liking for accepting (gifts); he should not collect (a gift) from a śūdra. A brāhmaṇa who takes more (than necessary for) his maintenance, goes the downward path. He who is not contented, does not become fit for heaven. He afflicts people; he is like a thief. Desiring to emancipate his preceptor and servants he should gratify deities and guests, and should accept gifts from all (sources), but should never gratify himself. A householder who has thus controlled himself, and honours deities and guests, and who lives with a controlled mind, goes to that highest position. Entrusting his wife to his sons and going to the forest, the wise one, being neutral and composed should always move all alone. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you this way of life of the householders. Knowing it one should follow it and make the

twice-born ones follow it. In this way he should, following the householder's way, continuously worship the only, eternal lord. Going beyond all births as creatures, he goes to the original cause and does not get another birth.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Code of Conduct for an Anchorite

Vyāsa said :

1-4. Having thus remained in the householder's stage during the second part of his life, he should, with his wife and (the sacred) fire, resort to the third stage of life. Or, having entrusted his wife to his sons, he should go to a forest after seeing the child of his child (i.e. the grandchild) and when his body has become infirm. He, observing a vow and being calm, should practise penance after having gone to a forest in the forenoon (of a day) in the bright half of a month in the auspicious uttarāyaṇa (i.e. the summer solstice). He should everyday fetch for his food pure roots and fruits. With that which is his food, he should please the manes and deities.

5-15. He should everyday please the guests, and after bath he should worship gods. Being calm and getting eight morsels of food from his house, he should eat them. He should have matted hair and should not cut off his nails and hair. He should always recite sacred texts and refrain from talking about anything else. He should maintain the sacred fire and perform the five sacrifices with the various things that are produced (there) or with vegetables or roots or fruits; he should be clothed in bark and being pure should bathe thrice (a day). He should be compassionate towards all beings and should avoid accepting (gifts). A twice-born should always perform the new moon and full moon sacrifices. He should perform the seasonal sacrifice and also offer an oblation of the first fruits at the end of the rainy season and perform the cāturmāsya sacrifices (performed every four months, i.e. at the beginning of Kārtika, Phālguna

and Āṣāḍha). In the summer solstice and the winter solstice he should, in the proper order, perform sacrifices with products of the spring and the autumn seasons brought by himself, and should separately offer puroḍāśas and carūs. Having offered more auspicious oblations to deities and manes, he should eat the remaining, saline in taste and prepared by himself. He should avoid liquor and fiesh and mushrooms growing on the ground. He should not eat fragrant or young grass, no fruits of śleṣmātaka, no products of ploughed land nor that which is abandoned by others. Even when he is sick he should not eat flowers and fruits growing in villages. He should always wait upon fire with rites as laid down in the Vedas. He should not bear malice against any being; he should be free from the pairs of opposites; he should be fearless. He should not eat anything at night, and should engage himself in meditation at night.

16-26a. He should control his senses, curb his anger and should think over the true nature of Brahman. He should always observe celibacy and should not even resort to (i.e. cohabit with) his wife. That twice-born, who, after having gone to the forest copulates at his will with his wife, has his vow lost, and he has to atone for it. The foetus (i.e. the child) that is born there (i.e. due to this copulation) should not be touched by twice-borns. He is not entitled to (the study of) the Vedas; the same is (the rule applicable to the members born) in his family. Intent on muttering the Gāyatrī-hymn, he should always sleep on the (bare) ground. He should protect all creatures, and should always give gifts to the good. He should avoid censure, telling lies, sleep, idleness. He should maintain one (sacred) fire; should be without an abode; and should resort to the ground that is sprinkled with water. Being restrained, he should move with animals and live with them only. Being calm, he should sleep on a stone or sand. He should cleanse (i.e. finish his stock) instantly or within a month, or should have the stock lasting for six months or for a year. Having collected food according to his capacity by day, he should eat it at night. He should eat every fourth time or eighth time, or should avoid (food) according to the cāndrāyaṇa vow in the bright and the dark fortnights. He should eat boiled gruel of barley once in every fortnight. Or he should, conforming to the creed of an anchorite,

subsist on the natural flowers, roots and fruits which are withered. He should roam about on the ground or stand on the fore-parts of his feet for a day.

26b-36. He should divert himself with (various) places and seats, and should never give up calmness. He should observe the vow of the five fires[1] in summer; should expose himself to the rain in rainy season; should put on wet clothes in winter. He should gradually increase his penance. He should bathe three times a day and should gratify his manes and deities. He should stand on one leg only, or should always drink the sun's ray. Or he should move in the smoke of the five fires, or should move in the heat or drink Soma. In the bright half he should drink milk and in dark half cow-dung. Or he should eat withered leaves or should live by bodily mortification. He should always engage himself in practising abstract meditation, or should always recite the Rudra (-hymn). He should study the Atharvaśiras, and should be intent on studying the Upaniṣads. He should carefully observe the restraints and vows. He should use the hide of a black antelope; should have an upper garment and a white sacred thread. Having put on the fires, he should be intent on meditating on his soul. An ascetic, not keeping the fire, having no abode, should be intent on (getting) salvation. Moving among ascetic twice-borns or among householders or other twice-borns moving in the forest, he should beg alms. Or getting it from the village, he should, living in the forest, eat eight morsels. He should eat from a leaf-vessel or from his hand or from a piece (of a pot etc.). He should mutter various Upaniṣadic hymns for self-realization; he should mutter particular incantations, Gāyatrī-hymn and Rudrādhyāya also. He should set out on the great journey (death) and stop taking food. Or following the religious commandment of offering himself to Brahman, he should enter fire.

1. Pañcatapas—An ascetic who in summer practises penance sitting in the middle of four fires with the sun burning right over his head.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Rules of Conduct for a Sannyāsī

Vyāsa said:

1. Having thus lived in the stage of an anchorite for the third part of his life, he should gradually pass into the fourth stage of life in renunciation.

2-5. Having established the fires in the soul a twice-born would be a recluse. When he, engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, calm, intent on getting the knowledge of Brahman, has detachment in his mind for all objects, then (only) he should think of renouncing (the world). If reverse is the case, then he would fall. Having accomplished the Prājāpatya sacrifice (by giving away his own property) and the fire-sacrifice, he, being restrained, having put on a white or red garment should resort to the stage of the ascetic. Some are ascetics (following the path) of knowledge; some are ascetics (engaged in the study) of the Vedas; others are ascetics (following the path) of action. (Thus ascetics are said to be of three kinds.)

6-20a. He, who is free from everything, who is free from the pairs (like pleasure and pain), who is fearless and who is well-settled in himself is called *jñāna-sannyāsī*. He, who would be desireless and possessionless and would study the Vedas only, and desires salvation and has his senses controlled is called *Veda-sannyāsī*. The twice-born who having had fire in his possession, is intent on dedicating himself to Brahman and on performing great sacrifices, should be known as *karma-sannyāsī*. Of these three, the *jñāna-sannyāsī* is regarded as superior. For him, the wise one, there is nothing to be done nor does he have any mark. Free from the feeling of mine-ness, being fearless, calm, free from the pairs, subsisting on leaves, wearing an old strip to cover his private parts, or remaining naked he is engaged in meditation. He, a celibate, with his diet controlled, should fetch his food from the village. Being indifferent and desireless he should remain taking delight in the supreme spirit. He should move in this world for happiness with the help of his own soul (i.e. all alone). He should not desire death, nor should he desire life. He should wait for

death only as a servant waits for (his master's order). He should not study; should not engage himself (in any pursuit); should never listen (to anything). A meditating saint, who thus looks upon knowledge as the highest thing is fit for absorption into Brahman. The wise one should have one garment (only) or a small strip to cover (his private parts); should be clean-shaven or should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; should be tridaṇḍī and should have no possession; (or) should put on a red garment and always engage himself in deep meditation. He should live near a village, at the root of a tree or in a temple. He should be equal to his enemy or friend, so also (look equally upon) respect and insult. He should always subsist by begging, and should never eat from one place. For an ascetic who, through delusion or for some other reason, eats from one place only, no explation is seen in the religious texts. He should be detached from love or hatred; should look equally upon a clod or stone or gold; should abstrain from harming creatures, should observe the vow of silence and should be fully desireless. He should plant his foot kept pure by sight (i.e. watching that no impurity is contracted); should drink after it is filtered through a cloth; he should talk words that are purified by truth; and should behave in a way which is approved by his conscience.

20b-27a. Except in the rainy season a mendicant should not stay at one place (for a long time). Bathing everyday and being pure and virtuous, having a water-pot in his hand, he should always be engrossed in celibacy and be interested in living in a forest. If he is engaged in (reading) scriptures (leading to) salvation, is invested with the sacred thread, has his senses controlled, if he is free from religious hypocrisy and pride, and is free from censuring others and from wickedness, is endowed with the quality of the knowledge of the soul, he would obtain salvation. He should constantly meditate on the eternal deity called 'Om'. After having bathed and sipped water according to the proper rite and being pure, he, invested with the sacred thread, with his mind tranquil, with kuśas in his hand, with his red garment washed, with the hair (on his body) covered with ashes, should mutter hymns about the principal sacrifice or the presiding deity or the highest soul or whatever is said in the

Upaniṣads. Or the restrained ascetic, being a celibate, should live among his sons. He should everyday study the Vedas, (then) he goes to the highest position.

27b-31. These are his special vows : harmlessness, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, austerities, forgiveness, kindness, and contentment; or he should, having faith in the Upaniṣadic knowledge and being calm, and having bathed, should perform the five sacrifices everyday; and desiring alms, and being tranquil, should, from time to time, mutter the sacrificial hymns. He should everyday do sacred study, and should mutter the Gāyatrī-hymn at both the twilights. He should constantly meditate upon the absolute lord. He should always avoid food from one place, so also lust, wrath and possessions; he should wear one garment, or two garments; he should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; he should be invested with a sacred thread; the wise man having the tridaṇḍa in his hand goes to that highest Brahman.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Restraints for a Sannyāsī

Vyāsa said:

1-15. Thus the livelihood of the sages who have controlled themselves and are in the (fourth) stage of life is said to be (had) by means of begging or fruits and roots. He should beg for one time only; he should not be attached to expansion (of begging). An ascetic attached to begging, becomes also attached to objects of senses. He should beg from seven houses. He should not move again (for alms) if he does not get it (during the first round). An ascetic should wait (for alms at a door) with his face hung down for the time required for milking a cow. Saying, 'Alms (please)', he, pure and controlled in speech, should remain silent. The man, having washed his hands and feet and sipped water according to proper rite, and having presented the food to the sun, facing the east, should eat it. Having offered oblations to

the five vital airs, he, being calm, should eat eight morsels. Having sipped water, he should meditate upon the highest lord, Brahma. Manu Prajāpati has mentioned four (kinds of) pots for an ascetic: pumpkin gourd, wooden, made of clay and of bamboo. Before the fall of night, at midnight, during the last part of the night, he should everyday meditate upon the lord with special hymns at the twilights, after bringing to the lotus of his heart the lord called Viśva, the source of everything, the soul of all creatures dwelling beyond the darkness, the prop of all, the unmanifest, the joy, the immutable light, the one beyond Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the ether, fire and the auspicious one, that essence of all beings, the god of the form of Brahman. At the end of Oṁkāra, and having offered himself into the highest soul, he should meditate upon the lord, the ruler, living in the midst of the sky. He, meditating upon the ancient Puruṣa Viṣṇu, the cause of all objects and the only receptacle of joy, would be free from bondage. Or he should meditate in the heart, (on) the primal nature, the only cause of all beings, the abode of the illusion of the world, the life of all beings, where the world merges. The subtle joy of Brahman which those desiring salvation obtain, in that is placed Brahman—absolute and having knowledge as its characteristic. Having thought over the endless, true lord he should remain controlled in speech.

16-28a. This is said to be the most secret knowledge for the ascetics. He who always remains in this obtains the contemplation of the Supreme Spirit. Therefore, he should always be intent upon (securing) knowledge, should be greatly devoted to metaphysical knowledge, should study the Brahmanic knowledge, by which he becomes free from bondage. Regarding his being separate from all (else), he should meditate upon the absolute joy, the immutable one and the knowledge which is beyond that. Beyond that, from whom the beings originate, and knowing whom a man is not born here (i.e. in this world), stands one, the lord, the ruler. The man's entering him is eternal, auspicious and unchanging. He that is away from this is the lord, the great god. For the violation of each of the vows laid down for the ascetics and other vows an expiation is enjoined. A man having through lust, gone to (i.e. cohabited with) a woman, should being

calm and pure practise the expiation called Kṛcchra-sāntapana,[1] along with the restraining of his breath. Then, with his mind controlled, the ascetic should practise bodily mortification; and then having again come back to the hermitage, he should behave carefully. Falsehood that is not against Dharma, is not harmful—so say the wise. Yet such a horrible attachment should not be indulged in. An ascetic desiring religious merit, should observe fast for a night, and practise the restraint of breath a hundred times after having told a lie. Even if he is in a great calamity he should not steal (a thing) from others. The Smṛti says that there is no worse sin than stealing. Doing harm to others, extreme avidity, solicitation destroy the knowledge of the soul. That which is (called) wealth, is the outward life. He, whose wealth a man snatches, takes away his life.

28b-40. The ascetic of a wicked mind, violating his (usual) mode of life, and fallen from his vow, being again depressed, should behave carefully. If an ascetic would cause harm accidentally, he should perform the expiation (called) Atikṛcchra[2] or Cāndrāyaṇa[3]. If through the weakness of his senses, he emits (semen) on seeing a woman, he should have the sixteen kinds of restraints of breath. The wise go through the restraint of breath a hundred times for three nights if there is an emission by day. The expiation called Prājāpatya[4] is enjoined for taking food from one (house only), (eating) honey and flesh at the first śrāddha and on actually cognizing salt (*pratyakṣalavaṇaḥ*). All the sin of him who is always given to meditation, perishes. Therefore, a man should meditate upon Viṣṇu and be engaged in meditating upon him. He the great god should be known—that

1. Kṛcchra-sāntapana : Drinking the mixture of cow's urine, cowdung, milk, curd, ghee, water (flowing) from kuśa, and fastting the next day. (See Manu. 11.212)

2. Atikṛcchra : Eating one morsel for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and eating whatever is obtained without begging for three days, and fasting for the remaining three days. (See Manu. 11.213)

3. Cāndrāyaṇa : Bathing thrice a day, reducing one morsel on each day of the dark fortnight, and increasing one morsel on each day of the bright fortnight. (See Manu. 11.217)

4. Prājāpatya : Eating for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and three days without begging. (See Manu. 11.211)

is the highest light of Brahman, that has entered the indestructible and the immutable, and that is the inner soul, the highest Brahman. That alone is the indestructible, unchangeable, eternal, highest position. So he is worshipped and is called Mahādeva, in his abode called knowledge, the highest principle due to his contact with the soul. He does not recognize any other god than Mahādeva. He, who follows him—the soul—goes to the highest position. Those who regard themselves as different from the lord, do not realize that absolute highest Brahman, the indestructible principle. That god is Mahādeva. Knowing this, he is not bound. Therefore, an ascetic, with his mind restrained, engaged in (obtaining) knowledge and deep meditation, calm, and devoted to Mahādeva, should strive.

41-43. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you the auspicious stage (i.e. the way of life) of the ascetics, which was formerly told by the lord, the sage, viz. the Grandsire. A man should not give this auspicious knowledge about the way of life of ascetics, told by the Self-born one, to him who is not his son, or disciple or a meditating sage. Thus is made the statement about the restraints of an ascetic, which would be the only cause of the joy of the best of gods. Those whose minds are set upon (the lord) are neither born nor do they perish.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Devotion to Viṣṇu the Best Way to Salvation

Sūta said:

1-2a. Thus Vyāsa of immeasurable lustre spoke to the brāhmaṇas. Having said this much, having cheered up all the sages, the revered Vyāsa, the son of Satyavatī, went as he had come.

2b-8a. I have told you the rules about the castes and the stages of life. Having done this only, a man becomes dear to Viṣṇu, not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the

secret about it. Listen. O brāhmaṇas, the duties regarding castes and stages that were told now, are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the devotion to Viṣṇu in this world. In Kaliyuga only devotion to Hari is to be achieved. A man has to practise the duties in the other yuga. That religious man who keeping god Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, Hṛṣīkeśa, invoked by many, the ancient one, the great and the tranquil one, in his heart worships him, has conquered (all) the three worlds. A brāhmaṇa, having drunk the nectar of the devotion to Viṣṇu, has overcome the bite of the serpent of Kali-age, the blemish, the Kālakūṭa (poison).

8b-13a. What is the use of muttering (the names of other deities) if men (just) utter the name of Viṣṇu? What is the use of (holy) baths for him who has held the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet on his head? What is the use of a sacrifice for him who has held the lotus-like feet of Hari in (i.e. to) his heart? What is the use of giving (gifts) for him, if he has narrated the deeds of Viṣṇu in an assembly? He who, having heard about the multitudes of Viṣṇu's virtues, would again and again be delighted, gets the same state as he whose mind is fixed on Kṛṣṇa and is delighted through profound meditation. Those that bring in obstacles in it are said to be talking heretic and fraudulent things; the women who are in their company also obstruct devotion to Viṣṇu. The command given by the eyes of women cannot be overruled even by gods. He who has overcome it, is called Viṣṇu's devotee in the world.

13b-20. Even sages longing for the acts of women, become mad. O brāhmaṇas, where can there be devotion for Viṣṇu for those who are fond of women? O brāhmaṇas, they are demonesses moving in the guise of beautiful women; for they constantly eat up the minds of men. As long as there is no movement of the fickle eyes of a woman an art or science is effective, knowledge proceeds, the intellect grasping all sacred texts is very pure, muttering is (possible), resorting to sacred places is done, the preceptor is served, there is a desire to cross (the mundane existence), awakening takes place, discrimination is possible, there is a liking for the company of the good, there is a desire for (listening to) the Purāṇas. (Otherwise) O brāhmaṇas, a man would fall; and all dharmas would disappear. In the case of those who are favoured

with a little (portion) of the honey of the lotuses in the form of Viṣṇu's feet, the casting of the fickle glances of women is not powerful. Those, O brāhmaṇas, who have birth after birth served Viṣṇu, have given gift to brāhmaṇas, have offered oblations into fire, have been detached from that (i.e. being allured by women).

21-36. What indeed is said to be the beauty of women, is described as the lustre of their ornaments and garments. Why is the beauty of women described to be without love and knowledge of self? For, it is indeed the body possessing pus, urine, feces, blood, skin, marrow, bones and fat. Thinking it to be different in this way, a man having touched it would be pure after having bathed. O brāhmaṇas, the body formed by those (i.e. bones, marrow etc.) is found beautiful by men. Oh, what a bad condition of people, which is brought about by (their) misfortune, that a man proceeds, knowing that one without breasts is a man and one (with breasts is) a woman! On (proper) thought, what is a man and what is a woman? Therefore, a good man should, by all means, avoid the company of a woman. Who, on the earth, obtains success after having met with a woman? A man should avoid contact with a woman and with one who keeps contact with her. It is seen that her company is actually Raurava. People are greedy due to ignorance; and for that reason they are duped by destiny. A man would be roasted in the vulva of a woman—a hellish pit. He would again find delight in that (hell) from which he has come to the earth! Men take delight in that from which everyday urine and semen rising from filth come out. Who then would be impure due to that? In this world there is great trouble there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the mockery (done by) destiny! Again and again a man takes delight there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the shamelessness of men! Therefore, a wise man should think over the many multitudes of the faults of women. Due to coitus there is a loss of strength; and sleep becomes very young (i.e. overpowering). Due to his knowledge snatched away by sleep a man becomes short-lived. Therefore, a wise man should, with effort, look upon a woman as his death, and the wise one should cause his mind to seek delight in the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. Which great fool, leaving the service of the feet of Viṣṇu that gives pleasure in this world and in the

next, would serve the feet of a woman? The service of the feet of Viṣṇu causes absence of rebirth, (while) serving a woman's vulva (i.e. cohabiting with a woman) brings about the danger of (re-) birth. He would repeatedly fall into the womb (i.e. would be reborn) as one who is cooked out of a machine. He would again long for her and that would be his mortification.

37-48a. With my hands raised I am speaking. Listen to my important words. Put your heart into Viṣṇu, and not into the vulva (i.e. a woman) causing torment. That man who lives by avoiding union with a woman, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice at every step. There is no doubt that the lord of the world is pleased with him who through good luck has married a pious woman belonging to a noble family and avoids union with her after having produced a son on her. The pious ones declare that union with a woman is a bad union. When it is there, firm devotion to Viṣṇu comes never. Giving up all (others) attachments, he should entertain devotion to Viṣṇu. In my opinion devotion to Viṣṇu is difficult to get. There is no doubt that he who is devoted to Viṣṇu is happy. He should do that deed only which pleases Viṣṇu. When he is satisfied, the world is satisfied. When he is pleased, the world is pleased. The existence of human beings is declared to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Which man would not serve that unmanifest Viṣṇu whom gods like Brahmā and Śiva worship for pleasing him? The mother of him who keeps the pair of the feet of Viṣṇu in his heart, is very fortunate; (so also) his father is very blessed. Those men who say, 'O Viṣṇu, venerable to the world, affectionate towards those who seek your refuge' do not go to hell. Brāhmaṇas are especially the actual forms of Viṣṇu. With those who worship them suitably, Viṣṇu is pleased.

48b-72a. Viṣṇu would move (i.e. moves) over this earth in the form of a brāhmaṇa. Without a brāhmaṇa no rite is ever successful. Those who have devoutly put the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa on their heads, have gratified their dead ancestors and have also liberated their own soul. That sweet thing which is put into the mouths of brāhmaṇas is actually given into the mouth of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu himself enjoys it. Such people who worship Viṣṇu in his images etc. when he is actually seen in the form of a brāhmaṇa, are rare. That act (of

worshipping his image) is (to be done) when he (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) is not available. The earth is declared to be blessed due to its being the abode of brāhmaṇas. Whatever is offered into their hands, is offered into the hand of Viṣṇu. By salutation made to them wickedness disappears. By saluting a brāhmaṇa, a man is freed from sins like killing a brāhmaṇa. Therefore, good men should propitiate a brāhmaṇa after looking upon him as Viṣṇu. If something is given into the mouth of a hungry brāhmaṇa (by a men), he is sprinkled for crores of kalpas with streams of nectar after death (i.e. in heaven). The mouth of a brāhmaṇa is a great holy place which is not a barren spot with saline soil and which is without thorns. If something is sown there (by a man), he would obtain crore times the fruit. He who gives him (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) food of various kinds to please a brāhmaṇa (goes to) worlds full of great pleasures giving freedom till the end of crores of kalpas. He should, after honouring a brāhmaṇa, daily listen to a Purāṇa which is narrated by a brāhmaṇa and which is wild fire to (the forest of) sins. Of all the holy places, Purāṇa is said to be the best holy place, by hearing even a part of which Viṣṇu himself is pleased. As Viṣṇu taking up the form of the sun, moves for giving light to all the worlds, similarly for enlightening you Viṣṇu, in the form of a Purāṇa, moves among the beings. A Purāṇa is extremely sanctifying. Therefore, if one has a mind to generate (in himself) love for Viṣṇu, men should constantly listen to a Purāṇa, of the form of Viṣṇu. A tranquil devotee of Viṣṇu should listen to the narration of a Purāṇa, which is difficult to be had, which is spotless and which very much removes blemishes. A man should look upon it as the highest, since, O brāhmaṇas, having collected the significance of the Vedas, Viṣṇu, in the form of Vyāsa, created the Purāṇa. In the Purāṇa, piety is defined; and Keśava himself is piety. Therefore, when the Purāṇa is heard a man would become (one with) Viṣṇu. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) himself is a brāhmaṇa and Purāṇa also is like that. Having the contact of these two a man would be Viṣṇu himself. So also he could destroy his sin by sprinkling the water of Gaṅgā (over himself). Viṣṇu, in the liquid form liberates the earth. If a devotee of Viṣṇu in desirous of singing songs of Viṣṇu, he should have the sprinkling of (i.e. bath in) the water of Gaṅgā, which is pure and which purifies

(all other objects). The goddess Gaṅgā is said to cause devotion to Viṣṇu on the earth. That Gaṅgā is of the nature of Viṣṇu, and is the cause of the expansion of the world. A man should have devotion without any motive to brāhmaṇas, Purāṇas, Gaṅgā, cows and pippala (tree) looking upon them as Viṣṇu. The wise ones have determined these to be actually of the nature of Viṣṇu.

72b-87a. Therefore, he who longs for devotion to Viṣṇu should honour these. The existence of men is said to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Men resorting to the boat in the form of devotion to Viṣṇu cross (the ocean of worldly existence) which has the mass of the water in the form of the Kali-age, which is full of the alligators in the form of sins, which has the eddies in the form of indulgence in the objects of senses, which has abundant foam in the form of wrong knowledge, very severe on account of the great snakes in the form of wicked people, which is fearful and difficult to cross. Therefore, people should try to secure devotion to Viṣṇu. What pleasure does a creature obtain by enjoying in a false profession (when) he does not adhere to the playful account of Viṣṇu of wonderful sport? If the mind of men clings to the objects of senses, then they should listen to the wonderful stories about Viṣṇu which are mixed up with many (sensuous) objects. O brāhmaṇas, even if (they have fixed) their heart on (securing) salvation they should hear (stories about him). Even if they are casually heard, Viṣṇu would be pleased. Viṣṇu, affectionate to his devotees, though inactive, performed many acts for the well-being of his obedient devotees. He is not so (well) pleased by rites like a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices or a myriad Rājasūyas, as he is by devotion. Resort to the feet of Viṣṇu, which should be mentally resorted to, which were repeatedly resorted to by the good, and which are essential for crossing the ocean of mundane existence. O you wicked, cruel men, who are greedy for objects of senses, why do you yourself throw yourselves into Raurava (hell)? (The fall into hell) will come without resorting (i.e. if men do not resort) to the auspicious feet of Viṣṇu. If you desire to overcome your worries without any effort, then resort to the feet of Viṣṇu for not being reborn (i.e. to avoid rebirth). After thinking about where-

from a mortal has come and whereto he would go, an intelligent man should collect religious merit. (Even) if a man has risen after having fallen into many hells, and after having got bodies of the immobile gets manhood (i.e. gets birth as a man, yet) there (also) remaining in the womb (of the mother) is extremely painful.

87b-103. O Brāhmaṇas, if due to the inevitable consequence of his deeds a creature is born on the earth, he is afflicted by many blemishes like childhood. Having reached youth he is very much oppressed by poverty, or by a severe disease or by drought etc. also. A man would have indescribable trouble due to old age, or due to the mind's wandering here and there, or due to a disease. Then he would meet with death. Even in the mundane existence no greater grief than that is experienced. Then due to the inevitable result of his deeds a being is throubled in Yama's world. Experiencing severe tortures there, he is born again. A creature is born; he dies. He dies; he is again born. Such is the condition (of a man) when the feet of Viṣṇu are not worshipped (by him). Death without trouble or life without difficulty does not take place in the case of him who has not worshipped Viṣṇu. If there is wealth in the house what is the use of (just) preserving it? Would his wealth follow him when he is dragged by the messengers of Yama? Therefore, wealth given to brāhmaṇas after honouring them gives all pleasure. Giving (gifts) is a staircase leading to heaven; giving (gifts) destroys sins. Resorting devoutly to Viṣṇu increases great religious merit. If there is strength in a mortal he should not uselessly waste it. He should carefully dance and sing in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. Whatever men possess, they should dedicate it to Viṣṇu. What is dedicated to Viṣṇu gives happiness; but what is dedicated to someone else gives misery. By means of his eyes a man should observe the image etc. of Viṣṇu only. With his ears he should day and night hear the meritorious names of Viṣṇu. With their tongue the wise ones should taste the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. With their nose they should smell the tulasī-leaf (put) at the feet of Viṣṇu. Having touched with his skin Viṣṇu's devotee and having with his mind meditated upon his feet a man becomes blessed. No doubt should be raised about this. A wise man should set his mind upon him; similarly he should

have him in his heart. Men ultimately reach him only. No doubt should be raised about this. Which man would not resort to that beginningless and endless Viṣṇu who gives his own position if he is merely thought of in mind? A man should constantly fix his heart on Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. To please him he should, according to his capacity, salute him, think about and take delight in him. He should think of his two feet. Such a man alone would get respect in the world.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

The Merit of Reciting the Padma Purāṇa, Svargakhaṇḍa

Sūta said :

1-8a. Thus is the greatness of that highest lord Viṣṇu, taking up many forms, (Viṣṇu—) who is the cause of complete liberation in the world. One of the forms is the great *Padma* (*Purāṇa*). The *Brahma* (*Purāṇa*) is the head of Viṣṇu only. His heart is called *Padma*. The *Viṣṇu* (*Purāṇa*) is his right arm. The *Śaiva* (*Purāṇa*) is the left arm of the great lord. The *Bhāgavata* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his thighs. The *Nāradīya* (*Purāṇa*) is his navel. The *Mārkaṇḍeya* (*Purāṇa*) is his right foot; the *Agni* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be (his) left foot. The *Bhaviṣya* (*Purāṇa*) is the right knee of the magnanimous Viṣṇu only. The (Purāṇa) called *Brahmavaivarta* is said to be his left knee. The *Liṅga* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be the right ankle and the *Varāha* is the left ankle. The *Skanda Purāṇa* is the hair, and the *Vāmana* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his skin. The *Kūrma* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his back; the *Matsya* is said to his fat. The *Garuḍa* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his marrow; the *Brahmāṇḍa* is said to be his bone(s). Thus Viṣṇu was having the Purāṇas as parts of his body. *Padma* there (i.e. in the body) is the heart, having heard which a man obtains nectar (i.e. immortality).

8b-9. God Viṣṇu himself became (i.e. turned himself into) this *Padma Puraṇa*, having taught one chapter of which a man is freed from all sins. There (i.e. of the *Padma Purāṇa*) this

Svargakhaṇḍa gives the fruit of the entire *Padma*. Having heard the *Svargakhaṇḍa* even those who are great sinners are freed from sins as the serpents are free from their skins.

10-18. A man who hears this first (or best) *Svargakhaṇḍa* gets the same fruit even if he is extremely wicked and expelled from all religions. As a man having bathed at Prayāga in the month of Māgha is free from sins, similarly he would be free from sins by hearing (the *Ādi Svargakhaṇḍa*). He who has heard, and made (others) hear this *Ādikhaṇḍa* has given gold (equal to his own) weight, and has given the entire earth. He has given a gift to a poor man of the debt which he incurred; he has repeatedly recited the thousands of the names of Viṣṇu; he has studied all the Vedas, and has similarly performed all rites; he has settled teachers by giving them livelihood. O brāhmaṇas, he has also granted fearlessness to the people that were frightened; he has sought the consent of the virtuous, wise and pious persons. He has given very cold (water) between (i.e. during the period between) the sign of Aries and the sign of Cancer; he has also cast his life for brāhmaṇas and cows; He, the wise one, has also performed other good deeds.

19-25. Having well studied (i.e. if he studies well) the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, he obtains many pleasures. He, who has slept well, is awakened by women in his harem, by means of good (i.e. sweet) sounds of small bells and with sweet words. He enjoys half of Indra's seat and would live for a long time in Indra's heaven. From there he would go to the Sun's abode and then to the world of the Moon. Then enjoying pleasures in the abode of the Seven Sages, he goes to Dhruva, thence to Brahmā's world, and obtains a lustrous body. Having secured knowledge there only, he goes to (i.e. obtains) salvation. The wise one would live with the good, and would bathe at a holy place. The man would talk pious words and would listen to holy texts. (Among them) *Padma* (i.e. the *Padma Purāṇa*) is a great holy text, and gives the fruit of all the Vedas. In it *Svargakhaṇḍa* gives great religious merit. O people, if you want to cross easily the waves of longings, then resort to Viṣṇu, salute Viṣṇu, the only excellent god; you will go to worlds of very pure pleasures. Listen and utter the incomparable name of Viṣṇu. Obtain your desired objects.